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# HISTORY of WAR



**BATTLE OF  
IA DRANG**

**BLOW-BY-BLOW OF THE  
JUNGLE BLOODBATH**

# HITLER'S WOLFPACKS

**WHY THIS DEADLY U-BOAT  
TACTIC FAILED TO ANNIHILATE  
BRITAIN'S MERCHANT FLEET**



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## **BUTCHER CUMBERLAND**

How the conquering prince earned a bloody reputation

## **SPARTA'S NEMESIS**

Crushing the warrior elite



**PLUS: FIGHT FOR BANGLADESH • ROUNDHEAD SEAL • U-48**

Future

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ISSUE 049



# 'Rats of Tobruk'



EA128

**WHEN THE AUSTRALIAN 9th. Division withdrew into the Libyan port city of Tobruk in early 1941, a siege began that no one expected would last for eight long, grueling months.**

During that time the 'Aussies' and other British and Empire forces fought a vigorous and aggressive defence against the might of the newly-arrived Rommel and his Afrika Korps.



EA127



Backing them up is a set of 3 Australian infantry in the 'prone' position and a kneeling rifleman.

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EA124



It was at this point, perhaps in frustration, that Field Marshal Erwin Rommel himself, called the stubborn defenders of the Libyan port... "The Rats of Tobruk". Originally intended as an insult, the nickname was soon proudly adopted by the Australian 9th Division as soon as they heard of it.

### K&C'S DESERT RATS

Seen here are **THREE** small groups of 'sand-bagged' Aussie defenders armed with a mixture of .303 rifles, a bren gun and even a BOYES anti tank rifle.

Thanks in great measure to the Australians' grim determination to hold on Rommel and his men had their first setback in North Africa.

EA126



EA125





# Welcome

“The only thing that ever really frightened me during the war was the U-boat peril”

– Sir Winston Churchill

**A**fter the Battle of Britain, the next most serious threat to the UK's survival in WWII was the German U-boat campaign in the Atlantic. By taking out the vital lifeline of the merchant navy, Germany believed it could starve Britain into submission, a possibility Churchill admitted later in his memoirs to be his greatest fear.

However, even with the innovation of the 'Rudeltaktik' or wolfpack tactic, the Kriegsmarine was unable to destroy enough Allied shipping to cripple the British war effort. This issue explores how U-boat technology and tactics managed to cause mayhem among

Allied convoys, but why ultimately they were not enough to see Germany victorious in the Battle of the Atlantic.



*Tim*

**Tim Williamson**  
Editor



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## CONTRIBUTORS



**TOM GARNER**

This month Tom explores the military record of Prince William Augustus, known to history as 'Butcher Cumberland' after his ruthless crushing of the Jacobite Rebellion at the Battle of Culloden and its aftermath (page 54).



**MIKE HASKE**

As well as our Wolfpack cover feature (page 26), this issue Mike takes a look inside one of the most successful U-boats of WWII: U-48. He takes you through its impressive missions and its highly effective technical layout (page 40).



**WILLIAM WELSH**

Over 50 years ago, the Battle of Ia Drang saw the first pitched battle between US and North Vietnamese forces. It also saw the debut of helicopter assault tactics, which did not provide the swift victory that US generals hoped for (page 46).

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A US Coast Guard convoy escort depth charges a U-boat to the surface



Image: Alamy



# HITLER'S WOLFPACKS

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America's first pitched battle in the Vietnam War was a brutal encounter

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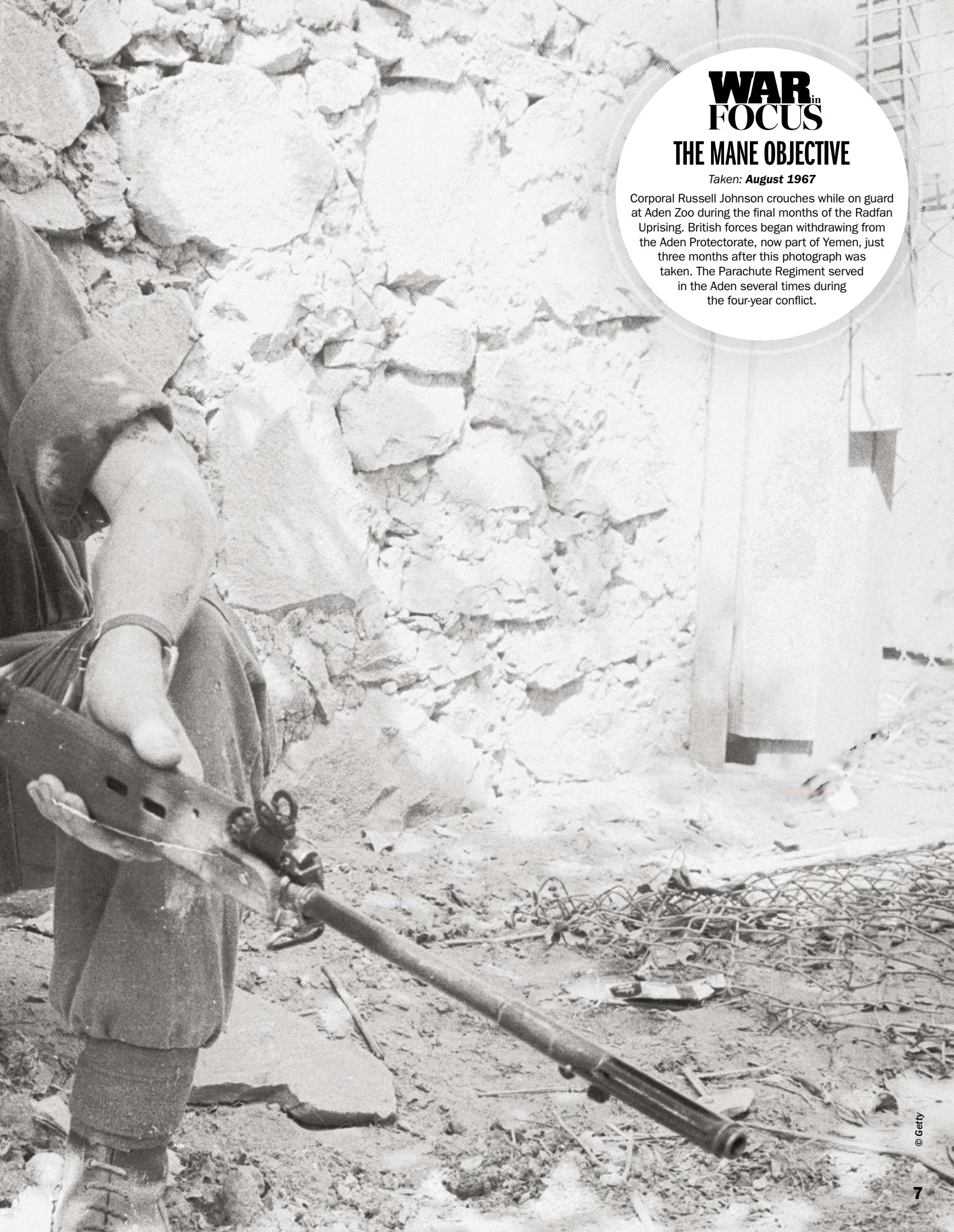
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# WAR<sup>in</sup> FOCUS

## THE MANE OBJECTIVE


*Taken: August 1967*

Corporal Russell Johnson crouches while on guard at Aden Zoo during the final months of the Radfan Uprising. British forces began withdrawing from the Aden Protectorate, now part of Yemen, just three months after this photograph was taken. The Parachute Regiment served in the Aden several times during the four-year conflict.









# **WAR**<sub>in</sub> **FOCUS** **ON THE LINE**

*Taken: c. 1942*

A factory worker lines up bullet shells on a factory assembly line during WWII. After the USA's entry into the war, men and women were encouraged to join the home front effort and fill the roles vacated by serving troops. However, many of these positions were lost post-war as the country scaled back its wartime economy.





**WAR**<sub>in</sub>  
**FOCUS**  
**RIVER PATROL**

*Taken: 11 March 1965*

Men of the Second Battalion, Seventh Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkhas, survey their surroundings on the Limbang river. After the Malayan Emergency, or 'Forgotten War' in 1960, communist insurgents continued the fight against the newly independent Malayan government, which was supported by British Commonwealth forces.









**WAR**  
**in**  
**FOCUS**  
**TOMCAT STORM**

*Taken: 1 February 1991*

A US Navy Tomcat fighter flies over the burning oil fields of Kuwait during the final month of the First Gulf War, or Operation Desert Storm. After the invasion of the sovereign state of Kuwait by Iraq the previous year, it took the American-led coalition just over a month to expel the Iraqi army from the small kingdom.







This artist's depiction captures the nature of the US naval victory at the Battle of Manila Bay



# TIMELINE OF THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

From negotiations to armed conflict, the march towards war between Spain and the United States was rapid

10 February 1878

## END OF THE TEN YEARS' WAR

A decade of open insurrection when Cuban rebels sought independence from Spain ends in a shaky peace treaty that postpones the full resolution of the question of Cuban sovereignty.

*A vocal crowd lines the streets of Havana as Spanish Governor Arsenio Martinez Campos arrives*



9 February 1898

## THE DE LÔME LETTER IS PUBLISHED

A personal letter written by Spanish Ambassador Enrique Dupuy de Lôme, in which he insults President William McKinley and refers to him as "weak", is published in US newspapers, inflaming American public opinion.

*Spanish Ambassador Enrique de Lôme*



15 February 1898

## REMEMBER THE MAINE

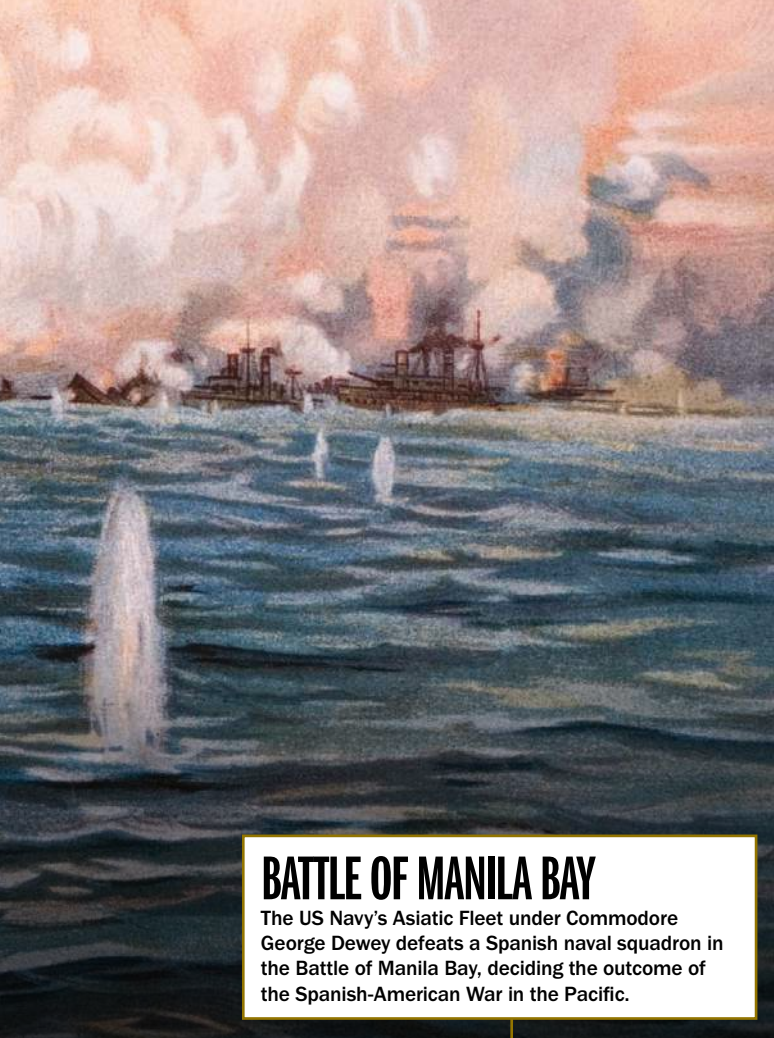
The battleship USS Maine explodes and sinks in Havana harbour, killing more than 200 American sailors. US newspapers and an inquiry blame the Spanish, pushing the countries closer to war.

*Explosion on the USS Maine. Spanish and US investigations of the explosion reached conflicting conclusions*



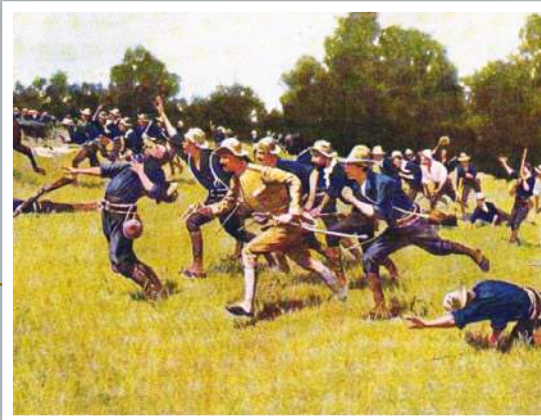


**“THE BATTLESHIP USS MAINE EXPLODES AND SINKS IN HAVANA HARBOUR, KILLING MORE THAN 200 AMERICAN SAILORS”**



**BATTLE OF MANILA BAY**

The US Navy's Asiatic Fleet under Commodore George Dewey defeats a Spanish naval squadron in the Battle of Manila Bay, deciding the outcome of the Spanish-American War in the Pacific.



**BATTLE OF SAN JUAN HEIGHTS**

The decisive battle of the Spanish-American War in Cuba ends in an American victory. Two days later a US naval task force defeats a Spanish squadron in the Battle of Santiago de Cuba.

*Theodore Roosevelt leads the charge of the Rough Riders up Kettle Hill during the Battle of San Juan Heights*

**FRENCH DIPLOMAT BROKERS CEASEFIRE**

Two weeks after French Ambassador Jules Cambon approaches the US government to discuss terms to end the Spanish-American War, a ceasefire is concluded. The Treaty of Paris is signed on 10 December.



*After negotiating for the Spanish government, French Ambassador to the US Jules Cambon signs the Treaty of Paris ending the Spanish-American War*

24 April 1898 → 1 May 1898 → 1 July 1898 → 12 August 1898 → 13 August 1898

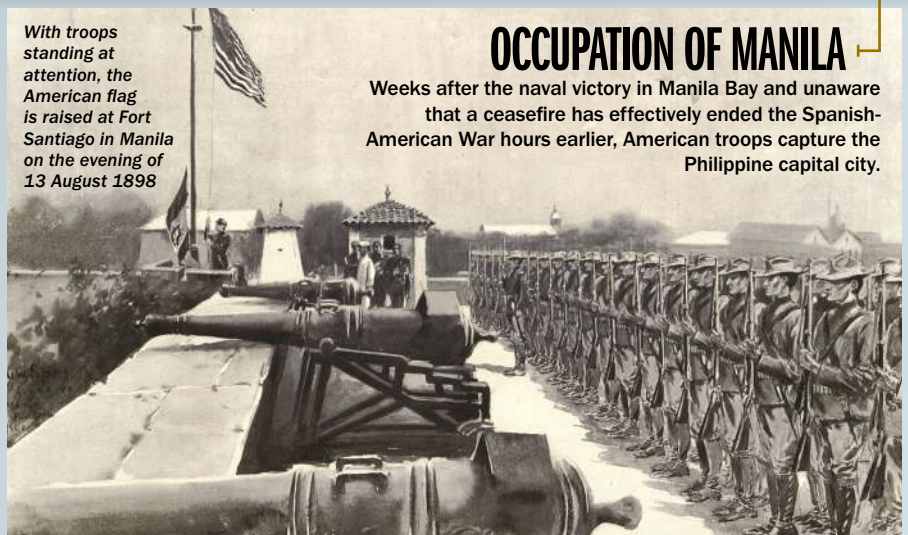


**SPAIN DECLARES WAR**

After rejecting terms to maintain peace, Spain declares war on the United States. The US reciprocates the following day, making its declaration retroactive to 21 April, when Spain severed diplomatic relations with the US.

*The Spanish declaration of war against the United States came from the government of King Alfonso XIII*

*With troops standing at attention, the American flag is raised at Fort Santiago in Manila on the evening of 13 August 1898*



**OCCUPATION OF MANILA**

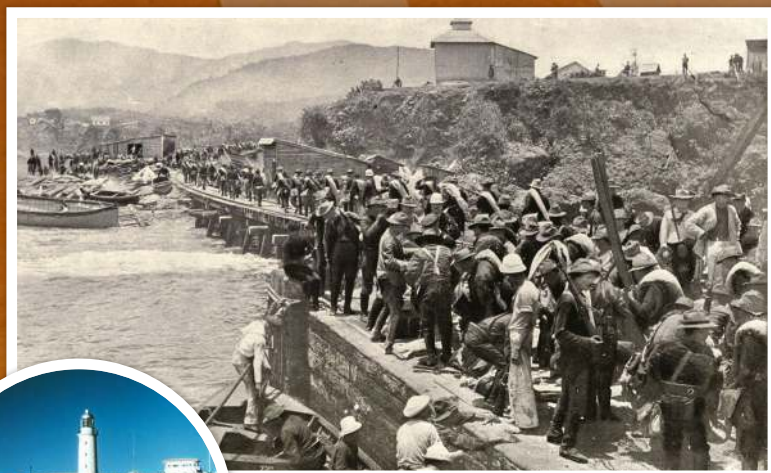
Weeks after the naval victory in Manila Bay and unaware that a ceasefire has effectively ended the Spanish-American War hours earlier, American troops capture the Philippine capital city.

Images: Getty



# AMERICAN CONQUESTS

US victories on land and sea in the Caribbean and the Pacific brought the Spanish-American War to a swift conclusion



## 1 AMERICAN LANDINGS AT DAIQUIRI

22 JUNE 1898

Opening the Santiago de Cuba campaign, American forces come ashore from transport ships at Daiquiri, a small village 23 kilometres (14 miles) east of the island's second largest city. They march overland to attack Spanish defensive positions and lay siege to Santiago de Cuba.

Left: American soldiers come ashore at Daiquiri, Cuba, during the opening phase of the Santiago de Cuba campaign

## 2 BATTLE OF SAN JUAN HEIGHTS

1 JULY 1898

Troops of the American Fifth Corps, including the famed Rough Riders and the Buffalo Soldiers, capture the high ground at San Juan and Kettle Hills, sealing the fate of the Spanish garrison defending the city of Santiago de Cuba. The city fell to the Americans two weeks later.

## 3 BATTLE OF SANTIAGO DE CUBA

3 JULY 1898

The combined North Atlantic and Flying Squadrons of the US Navy decimate a Spanish naval force attempting to run the American blockade of the harbour at Santiago de Cuba. The victory confirms American naval dominance in the Western Hemisphere, as another Spanish flotilla retires to protect its home country's coastline.

**"THE VICTORY CONFIRMS AMERICAN NAVAL DOMINANCE IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE"**



**HAVANA, CAPITAL OF CUBA**  
1898 NORTHWESTERN CUBA ON THE GULF OF MEXICO

Inset, above: The lighthouse and Castle of Tres Reyes del Morro were symbols of Spanish pride that dominate Havana harbour

**GUANTANAMO**  
1898 SOUTH EAST CUBA ON GULF OF MEXICO

**SAN JUAN, CAPITAL OF PUERTO RICO**  
1898 NORTHEASTERN COAST OF PUERTO RICO

**US LANDINGS IN PUERTO RICO**  
1898 CITIES OF GUANICA, PLAYA DE PONCE, GUYANAMA, AND ARROYO ON THE SOUTHERN COAST OF PUERTO RICO

Left: This landing team from the gunboat USS Gloucester came ashore at the village of Guanica, Puerto Rico

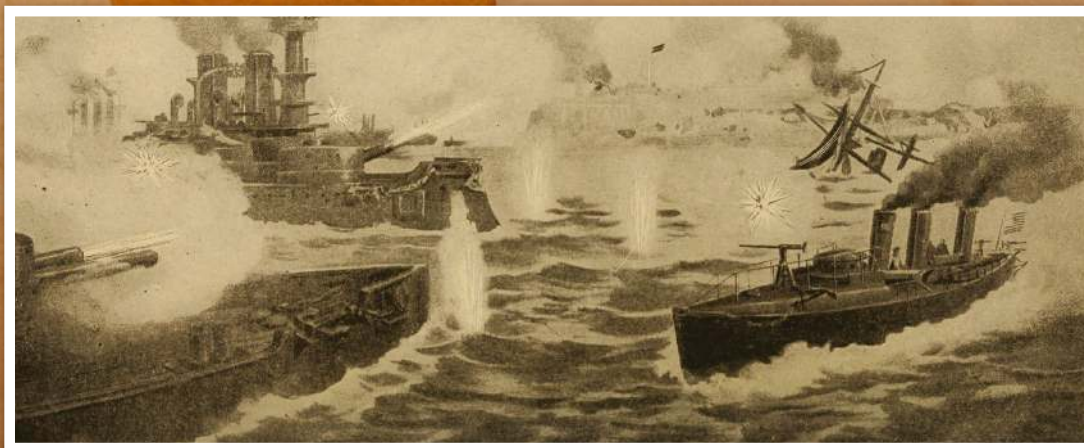


## 4 BOMBARDMENT OF SAN JUAN

12 MAY 1898

The naval guns of the US North Atlantic Squadron inflict considerable damage on Spanish fortifications at San Juan, the Puerto Rican capital. An American invasion follows in the south of the island, and a series of inconclusive clashes occurs. Military action on Puerto Rico is suspended with the ceasefire in August.

Right: American warships bombard the city of San Juan in Puerto Rico, the island's capital





The US Navy completely outclassed the Spanish naval squadron in the Pacific, suffering very little damage



## 5 BATTLE OF MANILA BAY

1 MAY 1898

The US Navy's Asiatic Squadron destroys a Spanish naval force and suffers virtually no damage in a one-sided affair. Every Spanish warship engaged is sunk, and the spectacular victory gives the Americans control of the waters surrounding the Philippines. The American commander, Commodore George Dewey, becomes a hero.

## 6 AMERICAN TROOPS CAPTURE GUAM

20 JUNE 1898

American troops disembark from the cruiser USS Charleston at the capital city of Agana and execute the bloodless capture of the island of Guam in the Marianas archipelago. The Spanish garrison on the island is unaware that war has been declared and surrenders. 54 Spanish soldiers are taken prisoner.

“THE SPANISH GARRISON ON THE ISLAND IS UNAWARE THAT WAR HAS BEEN DECLARED AND SURRENDERS”

### CAVITE CITY

1898 SOUTHERN SHORE OF MANILA BAY ON THE ISLAND OF LUZON

### ISLAND OF GUAM

1898 PACIFIC OCEAN EAST OF THE PHILIPPINES



### PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

1898 PACIFIC OCEAN NORTH OF THE EAST INDIES

Below: Spanish prisoners of war pose for a photograph shortly after their capture during the American occupation of Manila

## 7 BATTLE OF MANILA

13 AUGUST 1898

The Battle of Manila, during which American troops occupy the Philippine capital city, is an occupation involving little gunfire. The occupiers march into the city without knowing that a day earlier a ceasefire has been concluded ending armed hostilities.

## 8 FIRST REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

12 JUNE 1899

Days after their victory at the Battle of Alapan, Filipino guerrillas under Emilio Aguinaldo proclaim the First Republic of the Philippines. They join American troops fighting against the Spanish but ultimately turn against them when the United States takes possession of the islands. A bloody insurrection follows.



Images: Alamy, Getty



# STORMING SAN JUAN HEIGHTS



In a spirited clash with entrenched Spanish troops, American soldiers captured the high ground surrounding Santiago de Cuba, giving rise to a legend

*Color Sergeant George Berry of Troop G, Tenth US Cavalry Regiment, carries the national flag of his own command as well as the standard of the Third US Cavalry Regiment in the assault upon the Spanish works on Kettle Hill, San Juan Heights*

**O**n the morning of 1 July 1898, American soldiers of the Fifth Army Corps, commanded by Major General William Shafter, surveyed the heights surrounding Santiago de Cuba, Cuba's second largest city. The Americans had come ashore days earlier at Daiquiri and initiated an expedition against the Spanish stronghold, where General Arsenio Linares y Pombo commanded more than 10,000 troops and a naval squadron lay at anchor in the harbour. Linares detailed 500 soldiers to defend high ground collectively known as San Juan Heights, including San Juan Hill and Kettle Hill, outside the city. The defenders dug trenches and fortified a small, blue-washed blockhouse on San Juan Hill.

## STRENGTH VERSUS STRENGTH

Shafter commanded approximately 15,000 troops in three divisions, including the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry Regiments, black horsemen of the famed 'Buffalo Soldiers', and the First US Volunteer Cavalry, nicknamed the 'Rough Riders' – a collection of western cowboys and eastern aristocrats led by Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, the flamboyant former assistant secretary of the Navy. Due to logistical

difficulties, most of the American cavalrymen had reached Cuba without their mounts and would be forced to fight the coming battle for San Juan Heights as infantrymen.

To protect his right flank, Shafter sent General Henry Lawton and 6,000 troops of the Second Division to seize the village of El Caney. Although Lawton believed he could accomplish the task swiftly, 500 well-armed Spanish defenders held El Caney until late afternoon on 1 July,

**“MOST OF THE AMERICAN CAVALRYMEN HAD REACHED CUBA WITHOUT THEIR MOUNTS AND WOULD BE FORCED TO FIGHT THE COMING BATTLE FOR SAN JUAN HEIGHTS AS INFANTRYMEN”**



# RESOUNDING VICTORY AT SANTIAGO

**THE MODERN BATTLESHIPS OF THE US NAVY UTTERLY DESTROYED AN OUTCLASSED SPANISH FLOTILLA IN THE BATTLE OF SANTIAGO DE CUBA**

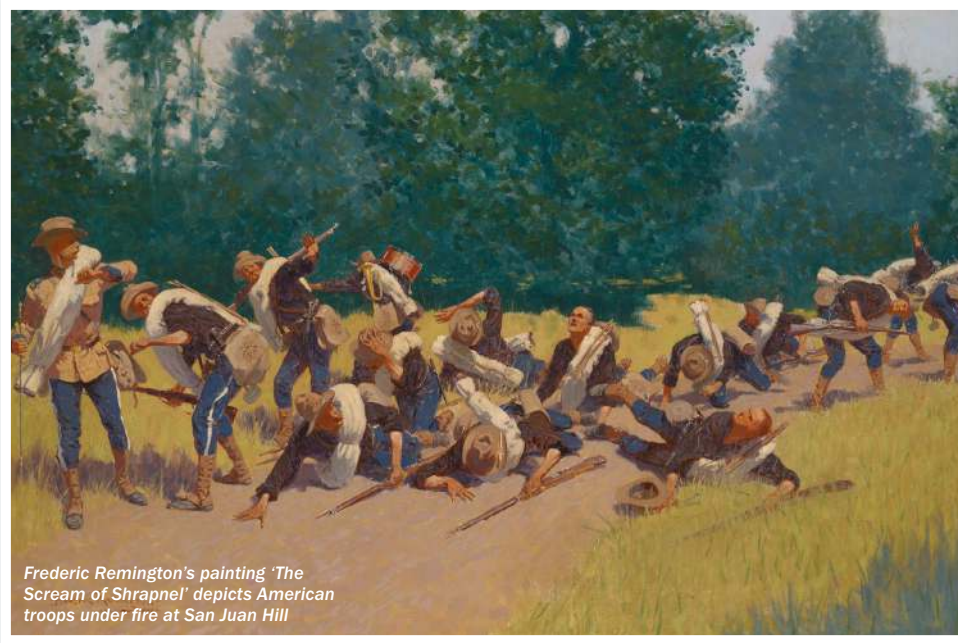
The US Navy's blockade of Santiago de Cuba lasted 37 days and ended violently on 3 July 1898, with the destruction of the Spanish squadron of four armoured cruisers and two destroyers under Admiral Pascual Cervera y Topete. While the heaviest armament the Spanish warships mounted was 28-centimetre (11-inch) guns, the battleships of the US North Atlantic and Flying Squadrons, under the senior command of Admiral William Sampson and Commodore Winfield Schley, mounted 33-centimetre (13-inch) main batteries. The Spanish vessels were plagued with unreliable equipment and weaponry. Poorly trained crews compounded their shortcomings.

Cervera attempted to run the American blockade that fateful morning, but six hours later his command was shattered. The armoured cruisers *Infanta María Teresa*, *Vizcaya* and *Almirante Oquendo*, along with destroyers *Pluton* and *Furor*, were either sunk or blasted and beached by the firepower of the battleships *USS Indiana*, *Massachusetts*, *Iowa*, *Texas* and *Oregon*, and the armoured cruisers *New York* and *Brooklyn*. The armoured cruiser *Cristóbal Colón* engaged in a running battle with *Oregon* that lasted over an hour before the damaged Spanish vessel was beached and struck its colours.

The stinging defeat left the Spanish with 323 killed, 151 wounded and 1,720 imprisoned. American losses amounted to only one sailor killed and one wounded.

**“THE SPANISH VESSELS WERE PLAGUED WITH UNRELIABLE EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONRY”**

*Battleships Iowa and Indiana, and armoured cruiser New York chase the Spanish destroyer Furor*



*Frederic Remington's painting 'The Scream of Shrapnel' depicts American troops under fire at San Juan Hill*

depriving the main thrust at San Juan Heights of reinforcements. Meanwhile, the movement against the heights continued as the fight for El Caney raged. More than 8,000 American troops advanced toward the 3,500-metre (11,480-feet) long Spanish line, coming under accurate rifle and artillery fire from above.

## HELL'S POCKET

After marching through thick jungle for about 30 minutes, troops of the First Division emerged from a wooded area and immediately took casualties. Several officers were wounded, and for a time confusion reigned. The exposed American position was later dubbed 'Hell's Pocket'. Temporarily sheltering from the hail of bullets and shells at the base of San Juan Hill and without specific orders, several lower-ranking officers took action. Lieutenant Jules G. Ord sought out his brigade commander, General Hamilton S. Hawkins, and blurted, "General, if you will order a charge, I will lead it."

Around 1pm elements of four regiments rose from their cover and advanced towards the summit of San Juan Hill. As the gradient steepened the lines frayed. Some soldiers tumbled down with wounds while the others pressed on. At a critical moment, three multi-barrelled Gatling guns opened on the

Spanish lines from a distance of roughly 550 metres (1,800 feet). Several enemy soldiers were immediately observed abandoning their trenches. As the Gatling guns sprayed the shocked Spanish, the leading American troops came within 140 metres (460 feet) of the crest. Seconds later the attackers sprang into a furious charge that routed the defenders. After 50 minutes of intense combat the Americans had seized San Juan Hill.

## BLOODSHED AT KETTLE HILL

Meanwhile, the action at Kettle Hill was furious. The dismounted Tenth Cavalry, with the Rough Riders and Third Cavalry in support, stormed up the slope as Gatling guns chattered. Although defending fire and oppressive heat slowed their advance – causing units to become mingled and bunch up – the Americans pushed forward, reached the trenches on the crest and engaged Spanish soldiers in hand-to-hand fighting. The surviving defenders broke and fled towards Santiago, and the Americans began taking fire from San Juan Hill. However, the momentum of that attack soon silenced the enemy guns.

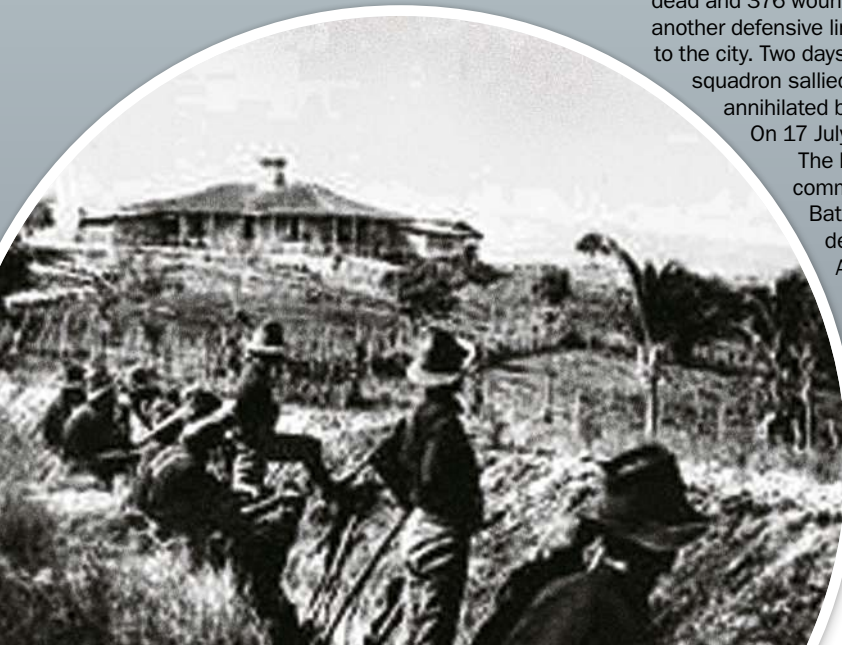
The capture of San Juan Heights sealed the fate of the Spanish defenders at Santiago. American losses amounted to 205 killed and nearly 1,200 wounded. The Spanish lost 215 dead and 376 wounded. Rather than assaulting another defensive line, Shafter chose to lay siege to the city. Two days later, the Spanish naval squadron sallied from the harbour and was annihilated by a superior US Navy flotilla.

On 17 July Santiago surrendered.

The Battle of San Juan Heights, commonly referred to as the Battle of San Juan Hill, was the decisive action of the Spanish-American War in Cuba and made Roosevelt, who displayed great heroism in the battle, a national hero.

*Left: American soldiers man a trench on San Juan Hill, with fortifications visible in the distance*

Images: Alamy





# TO BUILD AN EMPIRE

The conflict between imperialism and the ideals on which the USA was founded sparked intense debate

**W**ell beyond the first century of its existence, the United States pursued a foreign policy of expansionism. Although it may at first seem contradictory to the principles on which the nation was founded – those of government by consent of the governed – such a policy was nevertheless pragmatic. While those who opposed such expansionist endeavours considered the two points irreconcilable, those who favoured the territorial growth of the nation through the acquisition of overseas colonies and the domination of the Western Hemisphere believed that the United States was destined to take its place among the leading nations of the world.

Historical observers have asserted that the United States was founded on a policy of expansion – its own brand of imperialism – and inherent in that policy was the subjugation of indigenous peoples, despite the cornerstones of freedom and equality that were hallmarks of its own government. President Thomas Jefferson concluded the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. President James Monroe espoused the ‘Monroe

Doctrine’ two decades later, warning European powers to refrain from further incursions in the West. In 1853 trade considerations led to the opening of feudal Japan to American commerce. Following the Civil War, the nation resumed its westward expansion, purchasing Alaska from Russia in 1867, annexing Hawaii in 1898 and dealing forcefully with Native Americans while fulfilling the tenet of the concept of ‘manifest destiny’, as the United States stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific – from “sea to shining sea”.

As the nation grew, the debate between pro and anti-colonial factions within the US government became heated. Those in opposition contended that imperialism contradicted the American commitment to democracy. An empire in the Caribbean, Central America and the Pacific, they reasoned, would embroil the nation in regional conflicts, while the cost of maintaining and developing far-flung possessions would be prohibitive. Those who favoured expansion argued that overseas possessions would enhance American prestige abroad, support the nation’s realisation of its ‘manifest destiny’, and bolster the US economy

through trade, as precious raw materials were imported and finished goods were exported to new territorial possessions. In an attempt to pacify their adversaries, ethnocentric expansionists rationalised that domination by a democratic nation was preferable for an underdeveloped region when compared to exploitation by a European monarchy.

As the 19th century waned, the United States became more than a casual observer as the people of Cuba fought a ten-year war for independence from Spain. Cuba was only 145 kilometres (90 miles) from the United States, and though the Spanish considered the island a province of their country, the reality was different: the United States had become the dominant economic influence in Cuba. The Spanish empire was weakening, and aggressive expansionists within the US government saw the country’s overseas possessions, particularly Cuba, as ripe for the taking. In addition, reports of Spanish atrocities, real or concocted by a sensationalistic American press, raised humanitarian concerns.

The eruption of the Spanish-American War in the spring of 1898 was a direct result of public opinion that had been galvanised to support intervention in Cuba by so-called ‘yellow journalism’. A letter written by Spanish Ambassador to the US Enrique Dupuy de Lôme, in which the diplomat personally insulted President William McKinley, and the mysterious sinking of the battleship USS Maine as it rode at anchor in the harbour of the Cuban capital of Havana, effectively muted the opposition to armed intervention. However, the US Congress passed the Teller Amendment on 20 April 1898, pledging that the presence of the American military in Cuba would not lead to the island’s annexation and that the US would “leave control of the island to its people”.

In the wake of the short, one-sided war, the United States emerged as a world power with territorial gains in the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Guam. Despite the assurance of the Teller Amendment, America would continue to dominate the Cuban economy.

Within months of the acquisition of the Philippines, the American Anti-Imperialist League voiced opposition to the annexation of these Pacific islands. Notable among its leaders were author Mark Twain, industrialist Andrew Carnegie and the future secretary of state William Jennings Bryan.

While the wave of American colonialism rolled inexorably forward, the debate surrounding its moral, ethical and economic benefit would rage in the halls of American government for another 50 years.

**“DESPITE THE ASSURANCE OF THE TELLER AMENDMENT, AMERICA WOULD CONTINUE TO DOMINATE THE CUBAN ECONOMY”**



This 1896 painting by artist Armando Menocal depicts the death of Cuban rebel commander Antonio Maceo during the war for independence



**“HISTORICAL OBSERVERS  
HAVE ASSERTED THAT  
THE UNITED STATES WAS  
FOUNDED ON A POLICY  
OF EXPANSION – ITS OWN  
BRAND OF IMPERIALISM”**

*This cartoon depicting America as a world power after the Spanish-American War appeared on the cover of the humour magazine Puck in 1901*





# IN THE RANKS

The fighting men were a mix of veterans and volunteers who hurriedly learned the art of combat

**T**he armed forces of the combatants were in transition on the eve of the Spanish-American War. As the United States asserted its military strength on land and sea, the rapid recruitment and training of new troops became a priority. However, the Spanish military had already endured years of war in Cuba and absorbed the expense of maintaining an empire.



*Theodore Roosevelt and the Rough Riders after the Battle of San Juan Heights, 1898*

## ROUGH RIDERS

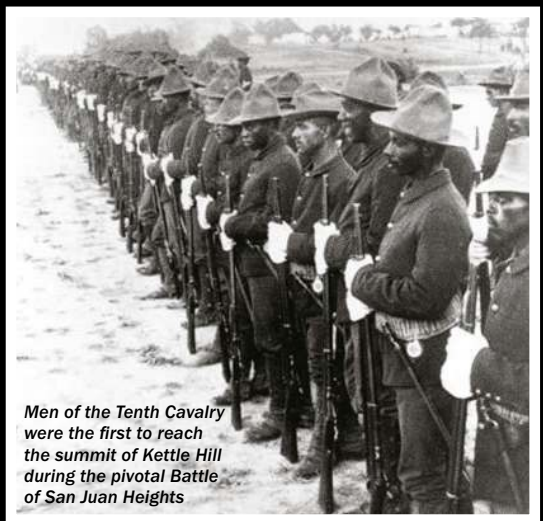
OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED THE FIRST UNITED STATES VOLUNTEER CAVALRY, THE ROUGH RIDERS GAINED LASTING FAME AT SAN JUAN HEIGHTS

Primarily recruited from the American Southwest, the Rough Riders also included the sons of prominent eastern families. Their commanders, Colonel Leonard Wood and Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, introduced a rigorous training program from the unit's inception in the spring of 1898, cultivating an esprit de corps among the cowboys, clerks, college students and Native Americans who volunteered. Equipped with the Krag-Jorgensen carbine rifle, most of the Rough Riders fought dismounted at San Juan Heights and became the most famous unit of the US Army during the Spanish-American War.

## TENTH CAVALRY REGIMENT

ONE OF THE INITIAL UNITS OF 'BUFFALO SOLDIERS' FORMED IN THE US ARMY, THE REGIMENT SERVED WITH DISTINCTION

At San Juan Heights the Tenth Cavalry, and other black units, served under white officers and contributed to the victory. The regiment was formed at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1866, with recruits from across the Midwest and South. Issued the standard Krag-Jorgensen bolt-action rifle, they entered the battle of San Juan Heights dismounted and were the first to reach the crest of Kettle Hill. Five troopers of the Tenth Cavalry Regiment received the Congressional Medal of Honor for heroism during the Spanish-American War.



*Men of the Tenth Cavalry were the first to reach the summit of Kettle Hill during the pivotal Battle of San Juan Heights*

**“FIVE TROOPERS OF THE TENTH CAVALRY REGIMENT RECEIVED THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR FOR HEROISM”**





## FIRST BATTALION, REGIMIENTO DE INFANTERIA “CONSTITUCION” Nº 29

MANY UNITS OF THE SPANISH ARMY WERE VETERANS OF THE WAR AGAINST CUBAN REBELS PRIOR TO HOSTILITIES WITH THE UNITED STATES

The First Battalion battled the US Army's Second Division at El Caney during the fighting around Santiago de Cuba. Armed with the Model 1893 Spanish license-manufactured version of the German Mauser rifle, the troops were well equipped and had been in Cuba for nearly three years by the time the Spanish-American War broke out. The unit's strength totalled 39 officers and 1,001 enlisted men. At El Caney the First Battalion fought to delay the American advance for several hours, losing nearly 300 men killed, wounded or captured in the process.

*Left: Spanish troops march through crowds in Madrid on their way to fight in the Spanish-American War in Cuba in 1898*

## CREW OF USS OLYMPIA

FLAGSHIP OF THE US NAVY'S ASIATIC SQUADRON AT MANILA BAY, THE USS OLYMPIA BECAME A SYMBOL OF AMERICAN NAVAL MIGHT

During the pre-Dreadnought era, the US Navy embarked on several programs of modernisation, leading to the construction of warships of iron and steel, enclosed turrets mounting ever larger

calibre guns and the conversion from sail to coal and steam power. The USS Olympia, an armoured cruiser launched in 1892, was a powerful, modern weapon of war that proved its effectiveness during the Battle of Manila Bay, which ended with the destruction of a Spanish naval squadron.

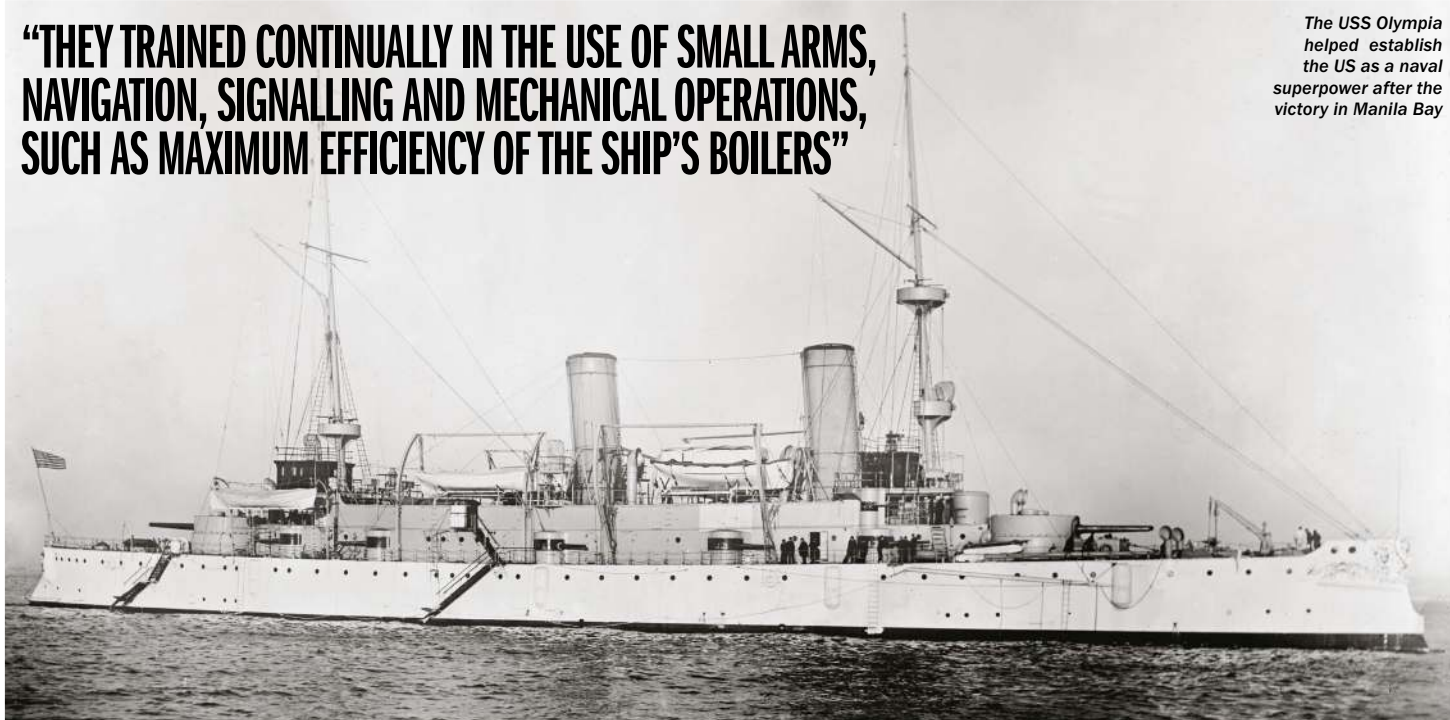
The combat efficiency of the 5,586-ton Olympia, regardless of its modern construction, equipment and armament, was dependent on the readiness of its crew, which was comprised of more than 400 officers and sailors, each

with a specialised task to perform. Crewmen drilled regularly on firing the 20-centimetre (8-inch) main batteries, as well as on the various secondary guns and the cruiser's four hand-cranked Gatling guns. They trained continually in the use of small arms, navigation, signalling and mechanical operations, such as maximum efficiency of the ship's boilers. They existed in cramped quarters, sleeping in hammocks, and rotated duty stations regularly.

After the victory at Manila Bay, the Olympia crew was lauded for its performance in combat.

**“THEY TRAINED CONTINUALLY IN THE USE OF SMALL ARMS, NAVIGATION, SIGNALLING AND MECHANICAL OPERATIONS, SUCH AS MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY OF THE SHIP'S BOILERS”**

*The USS Olympia helped establish the US as a naval superpower after the victory in Manila Bay*

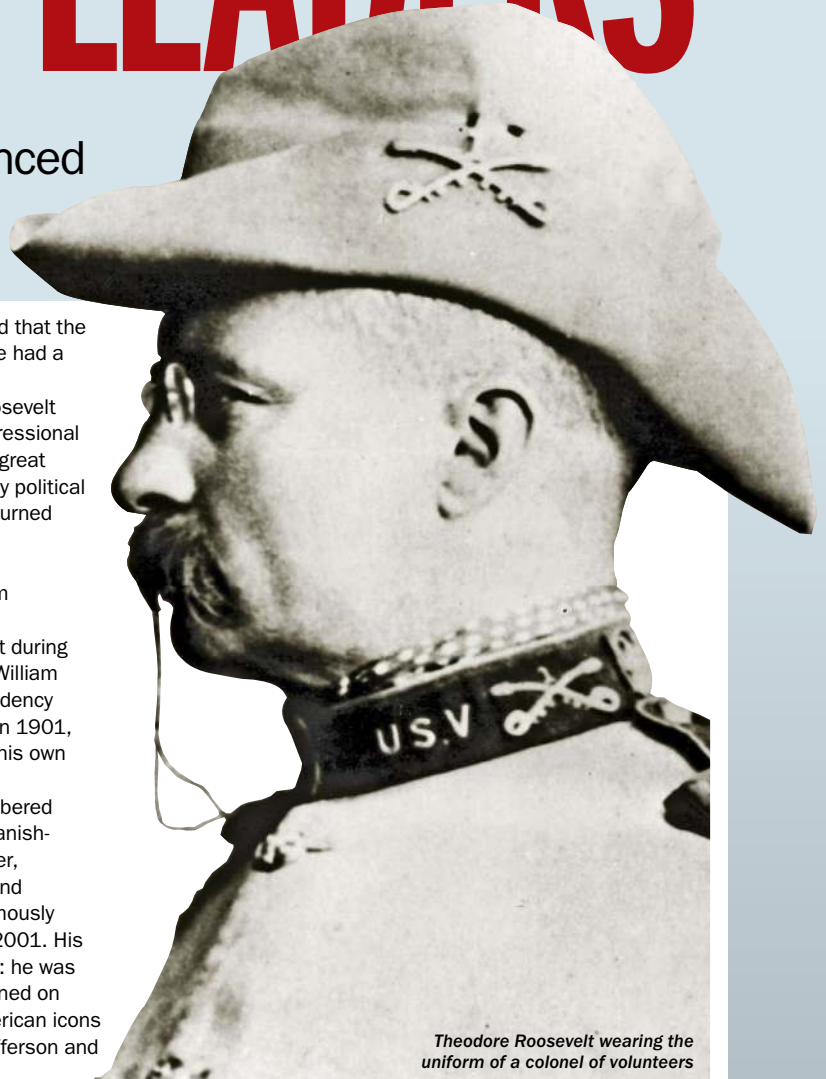


*Image: Alamy*



# HEROES & LEADERS

Military, political and social leaders burnished their reputations and influenced the course of history both during and after the Spanish-American War



Theodore Roosevelt wearing the uniform of a colonel of volunteers

## THEODORE ROOSEVELT 1858-1919 UNITED STATES

Born into wealth, Theodore Roosevelt was the son of a New York City philanthropist. He overcame childhood ill health and entered politics while in his 20s. Roosevelt served in the New York state assembly and was later appointed assistant secretary of the Navy. He also served as governor of New York, vice president, and 26th president of the United States at the age of 43.

Roosevelt pushed for the expulsion of Spain from Cuba, and in his naval role advocated the build-up of a fleet that rivaled the world's most powerful. With the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, he resigned from his naval post to raise a regiment of troops. Intent on experiencing combat, Roosevelt was instrumental in the formation of the First US Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, popularly known as the 'Rough Riders'.

During the engagement at San Juan Heights, Roosevelt led the charge of the Rough Riders up Kettle Hill. Along with other troops, including black soldiers, the Rough Riders swept the enemy from the crest. Roosevelt exhibited tremendous courage

during the battle and commented that the "charge itself was great fun... we had a bully fight."

In the wake of his heroics Roosevelt was recommended for the Congressional Medal of Honor; however, to his great disappointment it was blocked by political opponents. Nevertheless, he returned to the United States a bona fide war hero, which energised his political career and propelled him to the governorship of New York. He later served as vice president during the administration of President William McKinley. He assumed the presidency upon McKinley's assassination in 1901, and was elected to the office in his own right in 1904.

Theodore Roosevelt is remembered as the foremost figure of the Spanish-American War, a political reformer, adventurer, explorer, naturalist and preservationist. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor in 2001. His legacy is still remembered today: he was given the honour of being enshrined on Mount Rushmore alongside American icons George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln.



Moments before he was shot, President William McKinley enters a building at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo

## WILLIAM MCKINLEY 1843-1901 UNITED STATES

A veteran of the American Civil War, William McKinley was elected as 25th president of the United States in 1897 and again in 1900. He served until his assassination in September 1901 and was succeeded by Vice President Theodore Roosevelt.

McKinley was keenly aware that the resolution of the crisis in Cuba would become a defining issue of his presidency. Before leading

his country into war with Spain, McKinley attempted to resolve the question of Cuban independence through negotiations. When the Spanish government rejected his last overtures in April 1899, Congress declared war without a formal request from the president.

After victory was achieved, McKinley presided over a growing American empire, which included the Philippines, Guam and Puerto Rico. He was standing in a receiving line at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York, when anarchist Leon Czolgosz shot him dead.

**“MCKINLEY WAS KEENLY AWARE THAT THE RESOLUTION OF THE CRISIS IN CUBA WOULD BECOME A DEFINING ISSUE OF HIS PRESIDENCY”**



## JOSEPH PULITZER

1847-1911 UNITED STATES

An immigrant born in Budapest, Hungary, Joseph Pulitzer was a champion of sensationalist newspaper reporting, which came to be known as 'yellow journalism'. He was a heated rival of competing newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst and a proponent of an American war with Spain.

He served with the Union Army during the last year of the American Civil War, then became a reporter for the *St. Louis Westliche Post* newspaper and an active voice in political discourse. By 1878 he had amassed enough money to purchase the foundering *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and by 1883 had taken control of the *New York World*. Keen to increase circulation of his New York paper, Pulitzer engaged in reporting that, among other inflammatory assertions, blamed Spain for the explosion and sinking of the battleship USS *Maine* in Havana harbour in February 1898, just weeks before the outbreak of the Spanish-American War. His estate established the prestigious Pulitzer Prize.



Newspaper publisher Joseph Pulitzer swayed American public opinion in favour of war with Spain

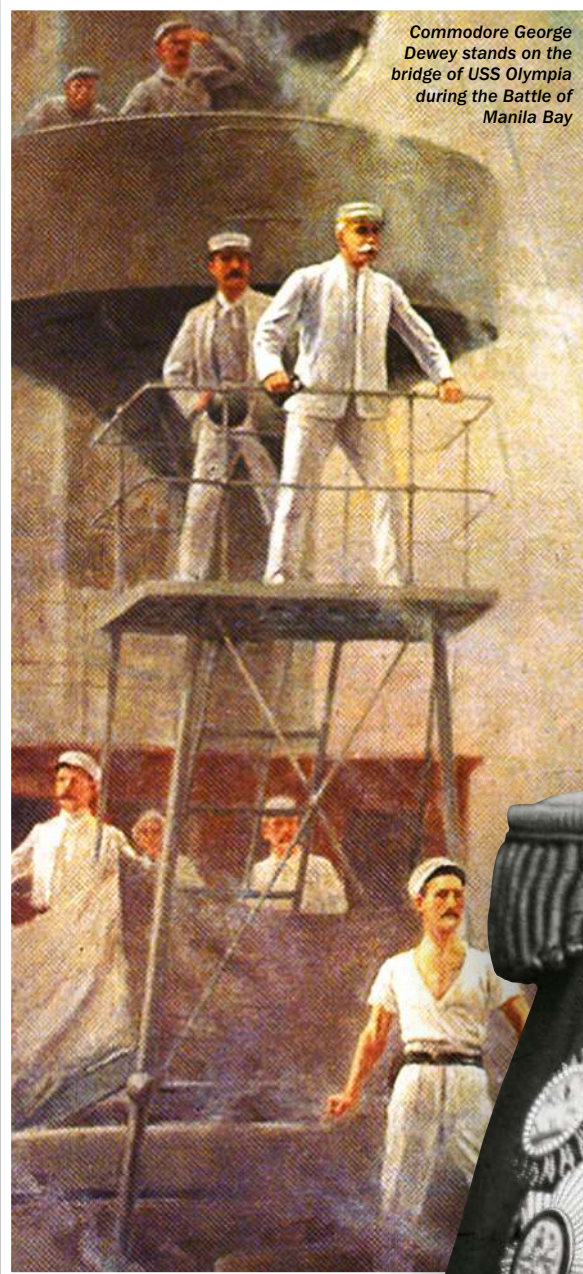
## ADMIRAL GEORGE DEWEY

1837-1917 UNITED STATES

On 1 May 1898 the US Navy's Asiatic Squadron utterly destroyed a flotilla of Spanish warships in the Battle of Manila Bay, the decisive engagement of the Spanish-American War in the Pacific. Commanding the American force, Commodore George Dewey barked the famous order to the captain of his flagship, the cruiser *Olympia*, "You may fire when ready, Gridley!" During the action the Spanish lost seven cruisers and a transport, along with 77 killed and 271 wounded. The Americans suffered one dead due to a heart attack, nine wounded and a single vessel damaged. Dewey, an 1858 graduate of the US Naval Academy, was hailed a hero and promoted to rear admiral ten days after his victory. He was later elevated to the newly created rank of admiral of the navy. Dewey briefly aspired to political office but remained in the military, serving as president of the General Board of the Navy Department until his death in 1917 at the age of 79.

**"DEWEY BARKED THE FAMOUS ORDER TO THE CAPTAIN OF HIS FLAGSHIP, THE CRUISER OLYMPIA, 'YOU MAY FIRE WHEN READY, GRIDLEY!'"**

Images: Getty



Commodore George Dewey stands on the bridge of USS *Olympia* during the Battle of Manila Bay

## GENERAL VALERIANO WEYLER

1838-1930 SPAIN

During 75 years of service to the Spanish crown, General Valeriano Weyler served as governor-general of the Philippines, governor of Cuba, military attaché to the United States, and minister of war. After commanding troops during the Ten Years' War to suppress the Cuban independence movement, Weyler was appointed governor of Cuba in 1896.

His aggressive effort to subdue the Cuban people led to the initiation of a ruthless program called the 'reconcentrado'. At Weyler's direction more than 1.5 million Cubans were relocated from their homes. Many of these were imprisoned in concentration camps, and due to a lack of food, water and sanitation hundreds of thousands died. Reports of Weyler's brutality resulted in a public outcry in the United States for action on behalf of the oppressed Cuban people, contributing to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War. Weyler was removed from office in 1897 but remained active politically in Spain. He died in 1930 at the age of 92.

General Valeriano Weyler served a brief but brutal term as governor of a restive Cuba





# HITLER'S WOLFPACK







## DURING WWII THE KRIEGSMARINE EMPLOYED A DEVASTATINGLY EFFECTIVE TACTIC THAT THREATENED TO STARVE BRITAIN INTO SUBMISSION

WORDS WILLIAM E. WELSH

**F**ollowing the Allied victory in 1945, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill admitted in his multi-volume history of the conflict that “the only thing that ever really frightened me was the U-boat peril.”

Through the lens of history it is easy to understand his concern as the Battle of the Atlantic unfolded and the island nation fought for its life against marauding German U-boats that relentlessly attacked Allied merchant shipping. From the day that Britain declared war on Nazi Germany through to 1945, the submarines of the German navy, the Kriegsmarine, under the capable but sometimes questionable command of Admiral Karl Dönitz, sank approximately 3,500 merchant vessels and 175 warships, sending 14 million tons of vital shipping to the bottom of the sea.

The U-boats' heavy toll on Allied merchant shipping was punctuated by remarkable successes against Royal Navy warships, providing a surge of propaganda for the Nazis. Even so, of the 1,162 U-boats that were constructed during World War II 785 were lost. Service with the Ubootwaffe, the submarine arm, was fraught with peril. By the time the war ended an estimated 32,000 German sailors, 30 per cent of those who served aboard U-boats, had been killed – the highest percentage of casualties among German combat forces during the conflict.

### An early angst

Despite advice from Admiral Dönitz and his direct superior, Grand Admiral Erich Raeder, that the Kriegsmarine would not be ready to go to war until 1944, Adolf Hitler launched the invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939, plunging the navy into a conflict for which it was ill-prepared. At the time Dönitz had only 56 operational U-boats – eight of which were only suitable for coastal operations or training. In the run-up to war he had pleaded for a building programme that would yield 1,000 ocean-going submarines

with which to strangle the British Isles, but production was slow to gather pace.

Dönitz was a U-boat veteran of World War I and had commanded his own boat and been taken prisoner, so he understood the rigors of U-boat service. Blockade had been unsuccessful during 1914-18 due to Allied employment of the convoy system, a lack of efficient radio communications and mounting losses among the submarines during four years of attrition, but Dönitz recognised that a blockade might actually succeed if emphasis were placed on the construction and deployment of undersea raiders this time around. However, convincing senior Nazi military planners, including Hitler, that such a tactic offered the best chance for victory was a frustrating exercise for Dönitz, who struggled throughout the war to maintain a force sufficient to threaten Britain.

### Law and orders

At the outbreak of war Dönitz had already deployed 22 U-boats to critical shipping lanes in the Atlantic. Such a small number of boats would never be sufficient to mount an effective blockade, but they did make their presence felt. The submarines reached the hunting zones around Britain by sailing around the northern tip of Scotland rather than through the treacherous passage of the English Channel. U-boat commanders initially received specific orders to abide by international maritime law. They were to surface and stop

**IN MAY 1945, THE FINAL MONTH OF WWII IN EUROPE, U-BOATS SANK 11,439 TONS OF ALLIED MERCHANT SHIPPING. 35 U-BOATS WERE DESTROYED.**

**“OF THE 1,162 U-BOATS THAT WERE CONSTRUCTED DURING WORLD WAR II 785 WERE LOST. SERVICE WITH THE UBOOTWAFFE, THE SUBMARINE ARM, WAS FRAUGHT WITH PERIL”**



merchantmen, identify the cargo, allow the crew to abandon ship and provide assistance prior to seizing or sinking their quarry. The German declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare had contributed to the entry of the United States into World War I, and Germany wanted to avoid such a situation as long as possible this time.

On 3 September 1939 the U-30, commanded by Kapitanleutnant Fritz-Julius Lemp, sank the British passenger liner Athenia. Echoes of the Lusitania attack brought additional restrictions on U-boats, but as the war in the Atlantic gained momentum Dönitz became increasingly aware that surfaced U-boats exposed themselves to the fire of armed merchant ships and Royal Navy warships, as well as attack from enemy aircraft. Additionally, radio operators aboard some merchant vessels immediately transmitted the signal 'SSS', which meant that the ship was under attack by a U-boat. In the admiral's mind this voided the rule of maritime law since the German submarine was then put at high risk.

The most frustrating aspect of the early U-boat combat experience was that their numbers were too few to fully implement Dönitz's preferred offensive system, 'Rudeltaktik', or the 'wolfpack'. With enough U-boats available, he had envisioned up to 15 submarines grouping

### **"DESPITE THE INABILITY TO RAPIDLY INTRODUCE WOLFPACK TACTICS ON A BROAD SCALE, EARLY U-BOAT SUCCESSES SHOOK THE ROYAL NAVY"**

to attack an Allied convoy, stretching any escorting warships to breaking point and inflicting maximum damage. A wolfpack was to patrol a particular zone of the vast Atlantic, covering a portion of an established convoy route. Once a submarine discovered a convoy, it would shadow the merchant ships and raise a radio advisory to headquarters, Befehlshaber der Unterseeboote (BdU), which

would in turn alert other boats in the area. When enough attackers were assembled to exploit the opportunity, headquarters would give permission to attack. Each U-boat could then act independently. Wolfpacks preferably struck at night and on the surface, launching torpedoes from distances of approximately 600 metres or in the midst of the ships at point-blank range, adhering to the Dönitz dictum, "Get in as close as possible".

Despite the inability to rapidly introduce wolfpack tactics on a broad scale, early U-boat successes shook the Royal Navy. On 17 September 1939 U-29, commanded by Korvettenkapitan Otto Schuhart, sank the aircraft carrier HMS Courageous off the coast of Ireland. A month later Kapitanleutnant Günther Prien executed the most daring submarine manoeuvre of the war. On the night of 14 October he guided U-47 through the block ships and cables supposedly safeguarding the expansive anchorage of the Home Fleet at Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands, sank the battleship HMS Royal Oak moored in the harbour and escaped into the North Sea.

Prien was summoned to Berlin for a personal audience with Hitler, awarded the Knight's Cross and became a national hero.

### **The game changes**

Meanwhile, Dönitz was anxious to employ his wolfpack tactics on a grand



*Right: Observing the world above the waves with the assistance of a first helmsmen in 1941*

*The tanker Dixie Arrow, its back broken by a torpedo, blazes furiously as it sinks in March 1942*





ADMIRAL KARL DÖNITZ, UBOOTWAFFE COMMANDER, LOST TWO SONS DURING WORLD WAR II. ONE OF THEM, PETER, DIED WHEN U-954 WAS SUNK IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC IN 1943. THE OTHER, KLAUS, WAS KILLED ABOARD A PATROL BOAT.

“WITH ENOUGH U-BOATS AVAILABLE, HE HAD ENVISIONED UP TO 15 SUBMARINES GROUPING TO ATTACK AN ALLIED CONVOY, STRETCHING ANY ESCORTING WARSHIPS TO BREAKING POINT AND INFLECTING MAXIMUM DAMAGE”

*Admiral Karl Dönitz led the U-boat arm of the Kriegsmarine during World War II and succeeded Hitler as leader of the Third Reich*





**THE PEAK MONTH FOR U-BOAT LOSSES IN THE WAR WAS APRIL 1945, WHEN 48 BOATS WERE SUNK.**

scale. Although the first co-ordinated U-boat attacks against British convoys were conducted as early as 1939, numbers were inadequate. He had outlined his plan for the wolfpacks to decimate enemy shipping in a memorandum to Admiral Raeder and noted that 300 operational U-boats would be needed to carry it out, given the fact that some would be active while others were either in transit or undergoing repairs.

Dönitz's critics point to his fixation on the tonnage of merchant shipping sunk, and the necessity that German submarine production would be sufficient to augment his forces while Allied shipping construction failed to keep pace with losses inflicted by the U-boats. Neither premise materialised. Dönitz also lacked the vision to implement better technology earlier in the war. His Type VII U-boats had limited range, reducing their effectiveness across thousands of miles of ocean. Construction of longer-range Type IX and Type XXI boats came too late.

Early U-boat production actually crept upwards: only 18 had been completed in 1939, followed by 50 in 1940 and 199 in 1941. Along with these growing numbers, German successes on the battlefield yielded a tremendous advantage. The conquest of Norway and France in the spring of 1940 brought new bases with ready access to the Atlantic – in some cases 725 kilometres (450 miles) closer to the shipping lanes than bases in the Baltic and North Sea. Soon, the French ports of Bordeaux, Lorient, St. Nazaire, La Rochelle and Brest were beehives of construction. Concrete submarine pens were built to shelter the U-boats. Wolfpack tactics were further developed and refined with the benefit of wartime experience.

While its performance in the Norwegian Campaign had been disappointing and its few successes had cost the U-boat arm four precious submarines, Dönitz re-energised

*Above: U-97 arrives back in St. Nazaire naval base after a patrol in 1941. She was sunk by Australian aircraft in 1943*

**“THE MOST PROLIFIC U-BOAT COMMANDERS BEGAN TO RACK UP IMPRESSIVE RECORDS. KAPITANLEUTNANT OTTO KRETSCHMER, THE HIGHEST-SCORING U-BOAT ACE OF THE WAR, COMMANDED U-23 AND U-99 AND ACCOUNTED FOR 47 SHIPS AND 273,043 TONS”**



# ORIGINS OF THE RUDEL TAKTIK

## VARIATION ON A GREAT WAR THEME

The introduction of the convoy system in World War I effectively countered the U-boat effort to cripple the Allied merchant marine, and as the conflict finally waned German submarines began assembling in small groups to attack targets. Successes were few due to efficient escort vessels and limited communications capabilities, while the number of available U-boats was insufficient. Although the Treaty of Versailles dismantled the U-boat force after World War I and the primary goal of the Kriegsmarine was initially one of clandestine rebuilding, there was discussion surrounding a group attack theory.

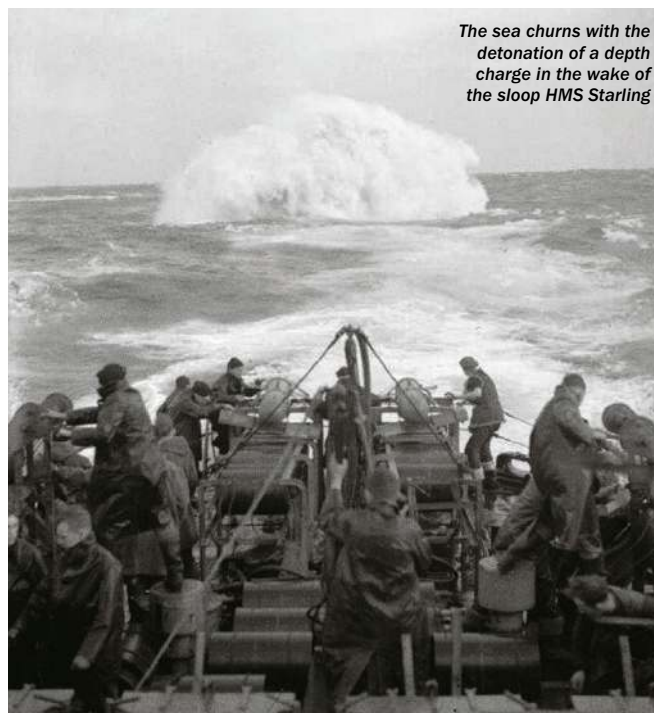
Debate often centred on the group attack tactic versus strides in technology that might make the U-boat a more formidable foe. The tacticians held sway. Admiral Karl Dönitz, commander of the Ubootwaffe, was consumed by the concept of the wolfpack, but the backbone of the U-boat fleet, the Type VII, was not appreciably more advanced than the submarines that had gone to war a generation earlier. When Dönitz assumed command of the Ubootwaffe in 1936 training in group tactics was one of his primary tenets.

To facilitate the wolfpack tactic and prosecute a 'tonnage war', Dönitz was required to rely on sufficient production of U-boats, the availability of trained crews and cooperation from the Luftwaffe in providing reconnaissance. Each of these developed slowly, sometimes grudgingly or not at all, delaying the implementation of the wolfpack tactic and limiting its potential to deliver victory in World War II.

*U-52, a Type VII-B submarine of the Kriegsmarine launched in late 1938, was scuttled at Danzig on 3 May 1945*



*Vice Admiral Heino von Heimburg, a successful World War I U-boat captain, argued for a commitment to technology in future submarine design*



*The sea churns with the detonation of a depth charge in the wake of the sloop HMS Starling*



*An American dive bomber flies above a convoy off the South African coast in November 1941, before US entry into the war*

his command. In 1940 resurgent marauders sank 30 merchant ships, totalling more than 284,000 tons in June. During the so-called 'Happy Time' – six months of unprecedented successes that followed – U-boats sank 282 ships and 1,489,795 tons of cargo. Despite the successes, that autumn the Ubootwaffe remained capable of deploying only seven or eight submarines at a time.

Information from B-Dienst, German naval intelligence, helped to locate convoys, and intrepid U-boat commanders scored remarkable successes. During a 30-hour killing spree in late October, two wolfpacks of only ten U-boats decimated Convoys SC 7 and HX 79, sinking 29 ships without loss.

The most prolific U-boat commanders began to rack up impressive records. Kapitanleutnant Otto Kretschmer, the highest-scoring U-boat ace of the war, commanded U-23 and U-99, and accounted for 47 ships and 273,043 tons.

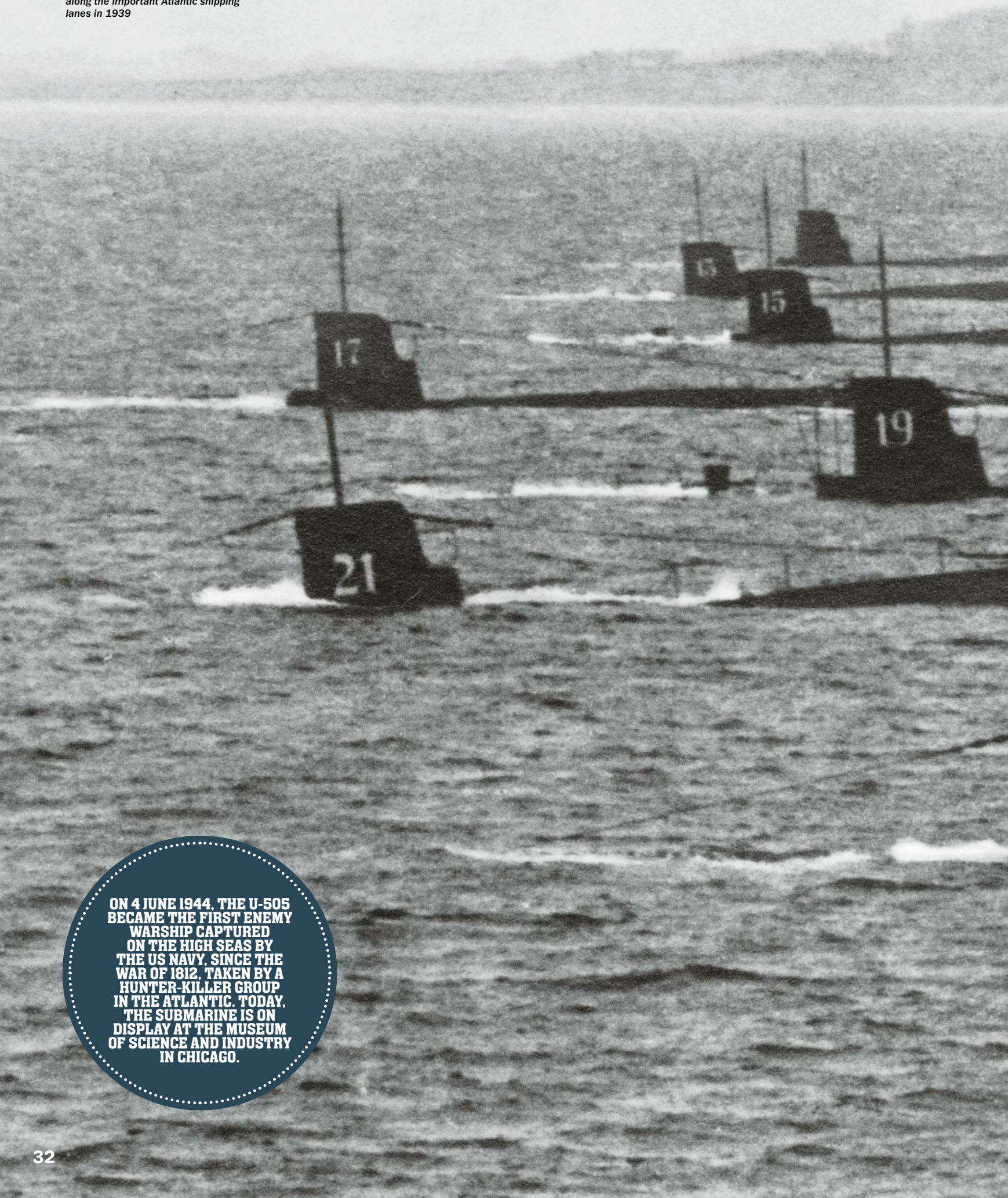
He was taken prisoner when U-99 was sunk on 17 March 1941 during a wolfpack attack on Convoy HX 112, eastbound from Halifax in Nova Scotia to Liverpool. Kapitanleutnant Wolfgang Lüth commanded multiple boats, including U-43 and U-181, and ended the war with 46 ships and 225,204 tons sunk. Fregattenkapitan Erich Topp sank 35 ships and 197,460 tons while commanding U-57 and U-552.

Kapitanleutnant Joachim Schepke emerged as a hero during the Happy Time, sinking five ships in only three hours during one attack. Handsome and gregarious, Schepke gained fame commanding U-100 and lost his life in action on 17 March 1941 during the same wolfpack assault that resulted in Kretschmer's capture. On 15 March Fritz-Julius Lemp, commander of U-110, spotted HX 112 and sent a signal for the grey wolves to rally. Four U-boats – U-99, U-100, U-37, and U-74 – responded. After dark, Schepke manoeuvred



## HITLER'S WOLFPACKS

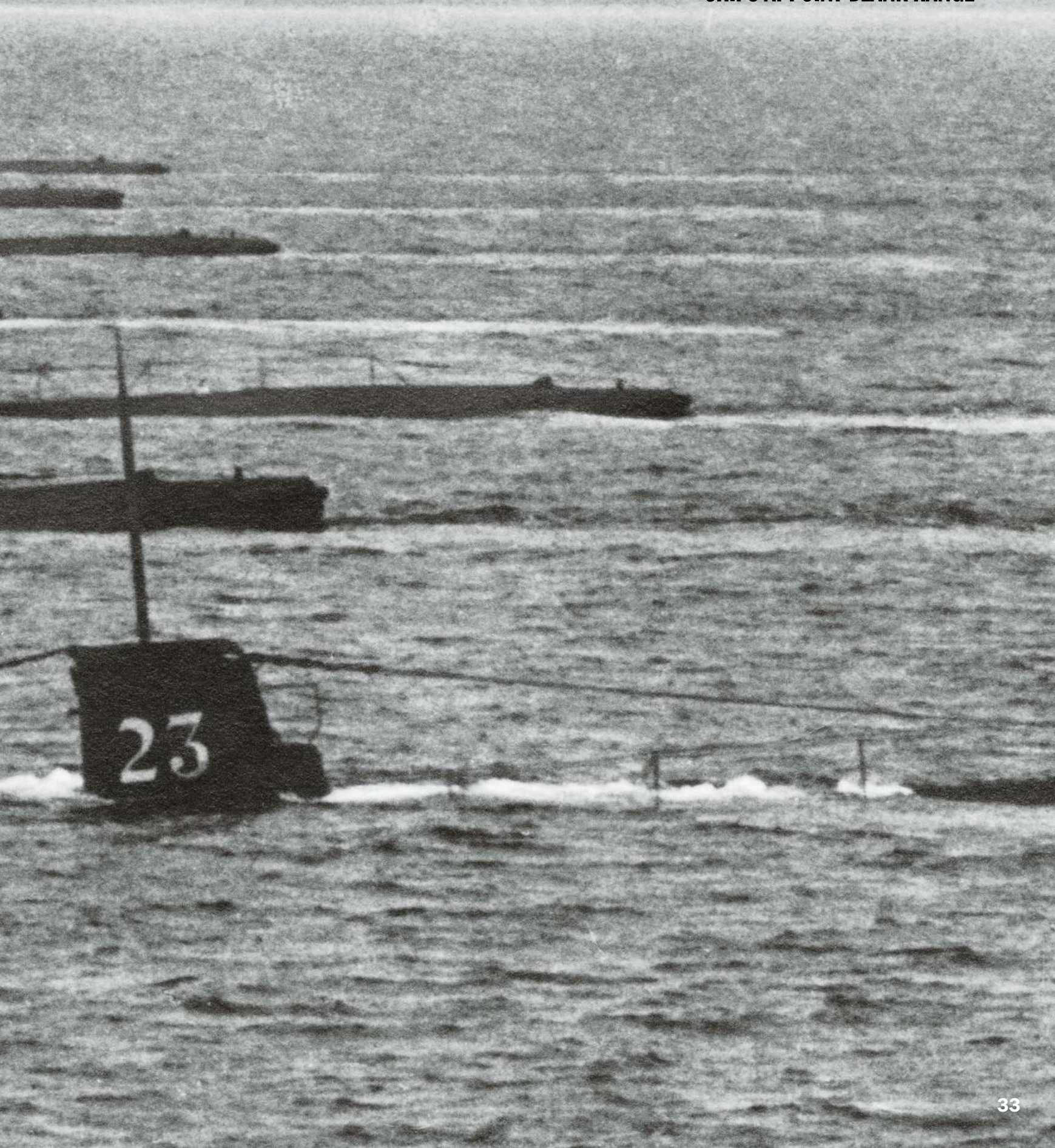
*A U-boat flotilla heads out to patrol along the important Atlantic shipping lanes in 1939*



**ON 4 JUNE 1944, THE U-505 BECAME THE FIRST ENEMY WARSHIP CAPTURED ON THE HIGH SEAS BY THE US NAVY, SINCE THE WAR OF 1812, TAKEN BY A HUNTER-KILLER GROUP IN THE ATLANTIC. TODAY, THE SUBMARINE IS ON DISPLAY AT THE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY IN CHICAGO.**



**“WOLFPACKS PREFERABLY STRUCK AT NIGHT AND ON THE SURFACE, LAUNCHING TORPEDOES FROM DISTANCES OF APPROXIMATELY 600 METRES OR IN THE MIDST OF THE SHIPS AT POINT-BLANK RANGE”**





## HITLER'S WOLFPACKS

British officers inspect a Hedgehog anti-submarine weapon installed on an escort ship. The Hedgehog was effective against U-boats at shallow depths



Left: Officers on the bridge of a Royal Navy destroyer keep watch while on convoy escort duty in the Atlantic in October 1941



U-100 within range of a large tanker and damaged it with a torpedo. Kretschmer, meanwhile, sank four tankers and a freighter in less than an hour. He followed that up with the sinking of another freighter within 15 minutes as he stalked the central column of the convoy and then made good his temporary escape.

But Schepke's luck was running out. The 41-ship convoy was escorted by six destroyers and corvettes, and they prowled the night, catching U-100 on the surface. At around 1.30am Schepke ordered his crew to crash dive. However, the destroyer HMS Walker was hot on the trail and laid a pattern of depth charges at close range. Schepke's boat shook and shuddered, sustaining damage. About 90 minutes later he brought the stricken U-100 back to the surface, only to see the destroyer HMS Vanoc bearing down, ready to ram.

Vanoc, first to use shipboard radar at night to locate an enemy submarine, sliced into the hull of U-100, dealing a deathblow and crushing Schepke against his periscope as the submarine sank. 37 other crewmen died with U-100; only six survivors were picked up. Kretschmer and U-99 fell victim to Walker, which picked up the submarine on ASDIC, an underwater sound detection system developed during World War I, and damaged the U-boat

with depth charges, forcing it to surface. Other escorts riddled U-99 with gunfire. As the submarine sank, Kretschmer and most of his crew were scooped from the sea.

After losing six ships and 50,000 tons of cargo, Convoy HX 112 continued without further incident, arriving at Liverpool on 20 March. The loss of two U-boat aces was a serious blow to the Kriegsmarine, compounding the melancholy accompanying the death of Günther Prien, hero of Scapa Flow, during an attack on Convoy OB 293 en route from Liverpool to North America. On the night of 6 March a wolfpack of four U-boats – U-47, U-99, U-70 and U-A (formerly

a Turkish submarine built in Germany) – moved against convoy OB 293 in the Western Approaches in the Atlantic.

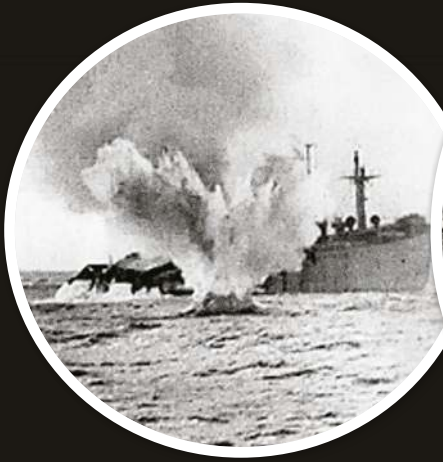
Prien made the rallying call, stalked the convoy and attacked after dark. The wolfpack sank four ships and damaged a fifth. However, the response from the escorts was devastating. The corvette HMS Camellia sank U-70 on 7 March, while the destroyer HMS Wolverine has been credited with depth charging U-47 and killing Prien. Some researchers conclude that Wolverine attacked U-A, which limped back to port, but the actual cause of U-47's demise is shrouded in conjecture and possibly attributable to damage followed by a diving accident.

**“PRIEN MADE THE RALLYING CALL, STALKED THE CONVOY AND ATTACKED AFTER DARK. THE WOLFPACK SANK FOUR SHIPS AND DAMAGED A FIFTH. HOWEVER, THE RESPONSE FROM THE ESCORTS WAS DEVASTATING”**

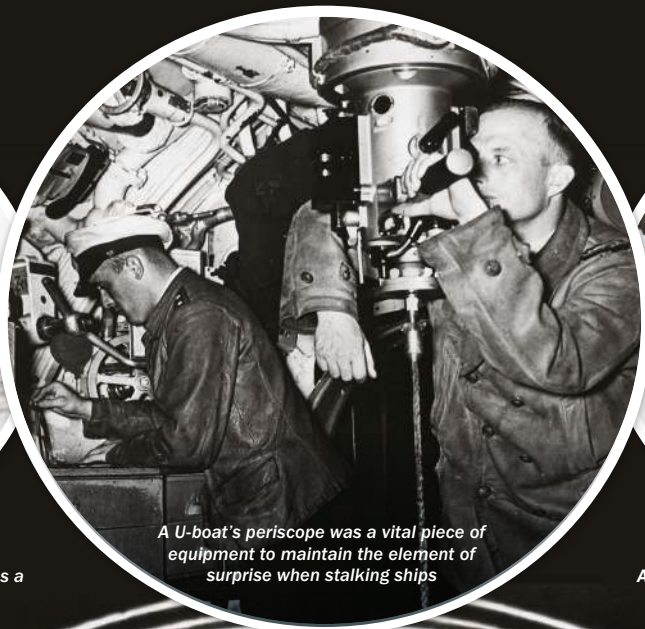
### Countermeasures and consternation

As the Happy Time waned, it was becoming apparent that Britain was developing better technology and defences against the wolfpacks, while the Kriegsmarine continued to emphasise tactics. In addition to ASDIC, better training of convoy escort crews, the proliferation of shipboard radar, the commitment of long-range aircraft from Royal Air Force Coastal Command and later the US Navy and Air Forces, and the development of better weapons such as the 'Hedgehog' contributed to mounting U-boat

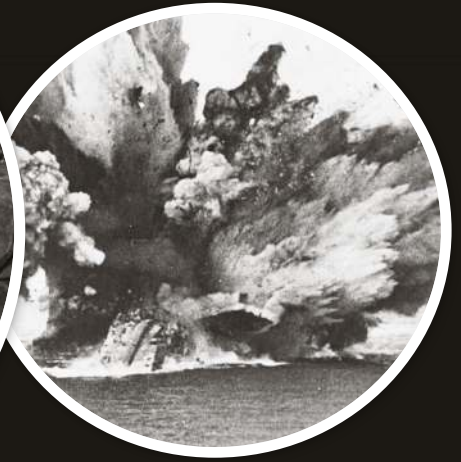




Above: A shell from the deck gun of a U-boat strikes a merchant ship that has already taken a torpedo hit



A U-boat's periscope was a vital piece of equipment to maintain the element of surprise when stalking ships



Above: The battleship Barnham explodes after being torpedoed by U-351 in November 1941

Left: A U-boat periscope reveals the devastation wrought on an Allied ship by a torpedo in 1942

“THE ACTUAL CAUSE OF U-47’S DEMISE IS SHROUDED IN CONJECTURE AND POSSIBLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO DAMAGE FOLLOWED BY A DIVING ACCIDENT”





# AN ITALIAN WOLFPACK?

## SUBMARINES OF THE REGIA MARINA



In the spring of 1940 the Italian navy, the Regia Marina, possessed nearly 120 submarines, although their capabilities were deficient compared to those of their German allies. After the fall of France, Italian submarines moved to ports on the Atlantic, establishing a base at Bordeaux. Their performance was disappointing early in the war as ten submarines were lost in the first three weeks, and only about 30 Italian submarines were operating at sea at any time in the conflict.

During the course of the Battle of the Atlantic, Admiral Karl Dönitz, commander of the German Ubootwaffe, attempted to blend Italian submarines into the wolfpacks that stalked the Atlantic sealanes. Results were disappointing due to performance issues. Italian submarines were relatively slow and cumbersome. Therefore, most of their combat experience in World War II was conducted during individual cruises in the South Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea. In the Atlantic, Italian submarines sank 109 Allied merchant ships and 593,864 tons of cargo.

The most successful Italian submarine of World War II was the Leonardo da Vinci, under the command of Gianfranco Gazzana-Priaroggia, the highest-scoring Italian submarine commander of the conflict. Leonardo da Vinci sank 17 ships and 120,243 tons of cargo, including the 21,500-ton passenger liner Empress of Canada, before falling victim to the destroyer HMS Active and frigate HMS Ness off the coast of Spain on 22 May 1943. All hands were lost. At least 88 Italian submarines were sunk during World War II.

*The Leonardo da Vinci was the most successful Italian submarine of World War II, sinking 17 Allied ships*



losses. The Hedgehog, which threw up to 24 bomblets in a pattern to increase the likelihood of a hit, was introduced in 1942 and credited with sinking 47 U-boats. Hunter-killer groups were formed to search and destroy U-boats – the one-time hunters becoming the quarry.

One of the most significant anti-submarine defences introduced was High Frequency Direction Finding, or Huff-Duff, which utilised intercepted U-boat radio traffic, usually between boats at sea and headquarters, to pinpoint the positions of enemy submarines. Huff-Duff employed two frequency interception locations, land-based or at sea, assessing the slightly different signals to determine a bearing. By the summer of 1942 U-boats were being caught on the surface at night without warning. Suddenly the ominous buzz of aircraft engines would be heard, the powerful 22-million candela Leigh Light stabbed through the darkness, and the illuminated submarine was pounded by bombs and riddled with machine gun fire. In the month of July, 12 U-boats were sunk. Nine were sent to the bottom in August, and during the next three months 39 were destroyed. Huff-Duff is believed to have contributed to nearly 25 per cent of all U-boat sinkings.

Eventually, as the number and expertise of convoy escorts and the deployment of improved anti-submarine defences continued to increase, U-boat losses reached staggering and unsustainable proportions. While 86 U-boats were lost in 1942, losses nearly tripled in 1943

to 241, with 42 in May alone and 38 in July. A total of 234 U-boats sunk or scuttled in 1944. Compounding the difficulties for the U-boats, British cryptanalysts had managed to break the German radio communications encrypted with the Enigma machine.

The capture of U-110 along with an intact Enigma machine and other cryptologic information by the destroyers HMS Bulldog and HMS Broadway and the corvette HMS Aubretia on 9 May 1941 facilitated the breakthrough. Lemp, captain of U-110, was shot dead by a member of the Royal Navy boarding party. The decrypted German messages were given the code name 'Ultra', and by July the first application of Ultra intelligence contributed to a dramatic drop in merchant tonnage lost – from over 310,000 in June to 94,209.

### From drumbeat to destruction

As Dönitz repeatedly tried to establish U-boat 'critical mass' in the North Atlantic, the demands for support of operations in North Africa diverted strength from the primary effort. While results improved dramatically, with 292,829 tons sunk in September 1941 as U-boats attacked convoys bound to and from Gibraltar, the gateway to the Mediterranean was also the scene of the first dramatic, clear-cut British victory over a U-boat wolfpack.

In December 1941 Convoy HG 76, bound for the British Isles from Gibraltar under the protection of the 36th Escort Group, was set



*A U-boat crew and officers hold a meeting in the bow of their vessel in 1939. The claustrophobic conditions made a strong bond between the crew vital*



## “THE MEDITERRANEAN WAS ALSO THE SCENE OF THE FIRST DRAMATIC, CLEAR-CUT BRITISH VICTORY OVER A U-BOAT WOLFPACK”

upon by a wolfpack soon after clearing the harbour. A four-day running battle ensued. Captain Johnnie Walker led the 17 escort vessels, including the escort aircraft carrier Audacity. On the morning of the 17 December U-131 was sunk in a combined effort of aircraft from Audacity and escort vessels. The next day U-434 was sunk. Shortly afterwards, U-574 torpedoed and sank the destroyer HMS Stanley. Walker's own ship, the sloop Stork, rammed and sank U-574. For good measure, the escorts sank U-567 the next day. Partially due to the incompetence of its captain, Audacity was torpedoed and sunk by U-751 on 21 December.

Despite the loss of Audacity and Stanley, five U-boats – half the attacking wolfpack – had been sunk, and other U-boats had sustained damage. Only two of the 32 HG 76 merchantmen were sunk. After news of the defeat reached Dönitz, 1941 ended amid an air of gloom at U-boat headquarters.

After US entry into World War II on 11 December 1941 a handful of U-boats were dispatched to the east coast of the United States, and for a period of several months wreaked havoc on American shipping. The US

was totally unprepared to defend against submarines. Dubbed Operation Drumbeat, the U-boat assault devastated merchant shipping from New England to Florida and into the Caribbean. In March 1942 95 ships were sunk, totalling over 530,000 tons. When the US Navy and Coast Guard finally implemented the convoy system, enforced blackout rules and stepped up coastal patrols, the diminishing return compelled Dönitz to recall his wolves. During the 'Second Happy Time' from January to August 1942, U-boats sank 609 ships carrying 3.1 million tons of cargo. Redoubled American anti-submarine efforts helped to account for the sinking of 86 U-boats in 1942.

In the autumn of that year wolfpacks scored renewed successes in the Atlantic and Mediterranean. Convoy escorts were fewer due to the demands of

*A Nazi propaganda cartoon depicts Stalin being speared by a U-boat, as the U-boat campaign sunk ships carrying weapons and supplies to the Soviets*



## THE HUNTING GROUND THE GREY WOLVES ROAMED THE OCEANS LOOKING FOR ALLIED PREY

Kriegsmarine U-boats ranged across the Atlantic Ocean, patrolling from Iceland and Scotland in the north to Sierra Leone on the coast of West Africa, Port of Spain, Trinidad, and eventually the east coast of the United States. They hunted in the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean and ventured into the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific.

Although the Ubootwaffe was spread thinly, its primary hunting zones were astride the east-west convoy routes in the North Atlantic as they took

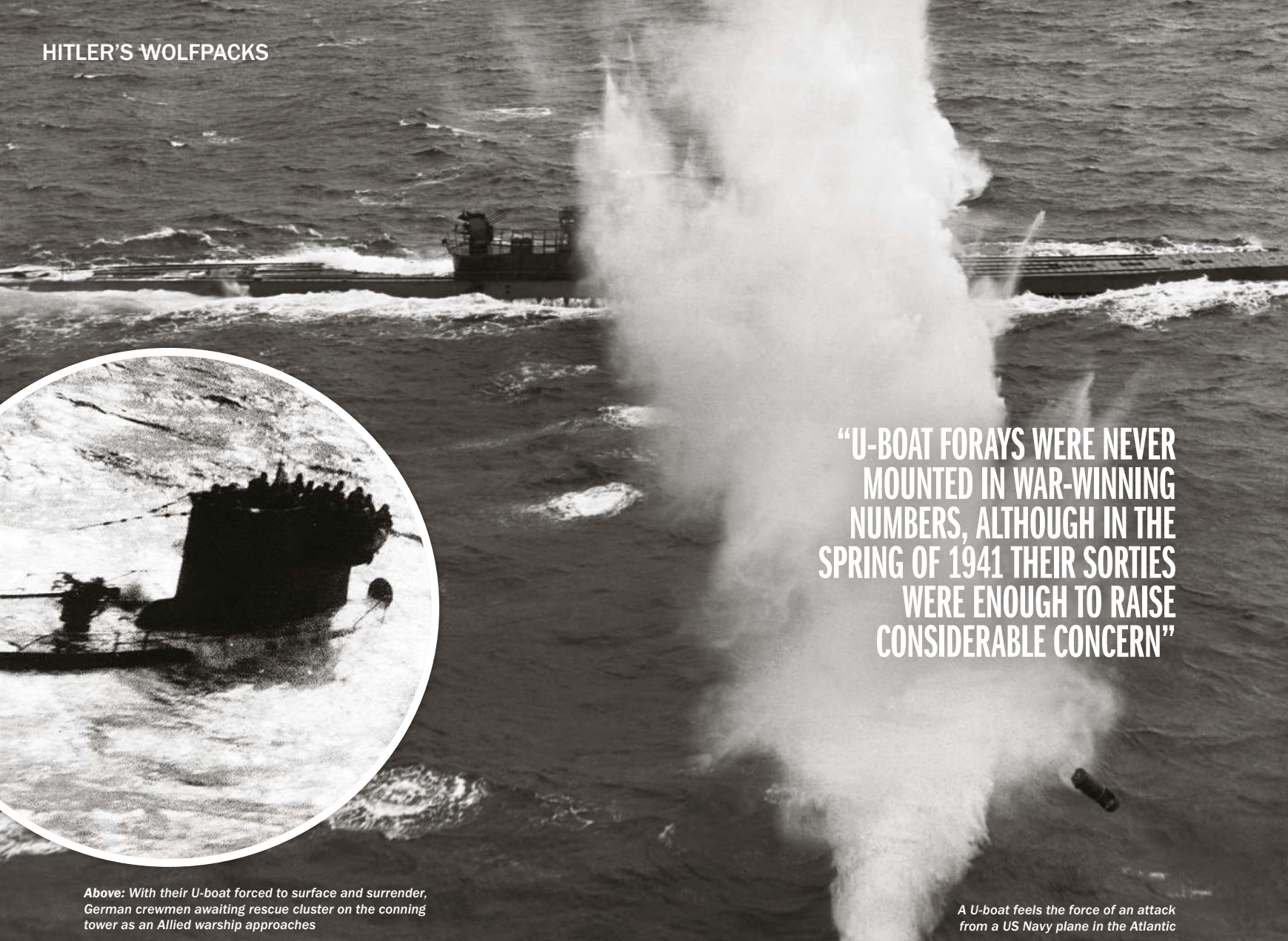
advantage of bases along the coast of France with access to the Bay of Biscay. Wolfpacks fanned out across the convoy routes in perpendicular cordons, hoping a submarine would make contact as other boats concentrated for an attack.

Successful sorties often occurred as convoys were accompanied by minimal escorts or sometimes no escort at all, as they crossed the Mid-Atlantic Gap out of range of air cover, or sometimes just as they cleared harbours at the start of their long, perilous voyages.

*Bound for Casablanca in November 1942, an Allied convoy stretches across the ocean and presents an inviting target for U-boats*

“WOLFPACKS FANNED OUT ACROSS THE CONVOY ROUTES IN PERPENDICULAR CORDONS, HOPING A SUBMARINE WOULD MAKE CONTACT AS OTHER BOATS CONCENTRATED FOR AN ATTACK”





**“U-BOAT FORAYS WERE NEVER MOUNTED IN WAR-WINNING NUMBERS, ALTHOUGH IN THE SPRING OF 1941 THEIR SORTIES WERE ENOUGH TO RAISE CONSIDERABLE CONCERN”**

*Above: With their U-boat forced to surface and surrender, German crewmen awaiting rescue cluster on the conning tower as an Allied warship approaches*

*A U-boat feels the force of an attack from a US Navy plane in the Atlantic*

Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa. Wolfpacks ravaged convoys in October and November, sinking more than 100 ships in each month and destroying 619,417 and 729,160 tons of shipping respectively. The November total was an all-time high.

In early 1943 pitched battles raged across the mid-Atlantic and the Western Approaches. Convoys were particularly vulnerable while sailing through the Mid-Atlantic Gap, also known as the ‘Black Hole’, an expanse of ocean initially beyond the range of RAF Coastal Command air cover. Before the gap was closed with longer-range aircraft that spring, losses were at times prohibitive. In February and March 1943 U-boats sank 359,328 and 627,377 tons of shipping in the Atlantic. However, 18 U-boats were destroyed in February alone.

The realisation that the U-boat war against the Allies was lost came abruptly. Within weeks of the spring triumphs, roles were reversed. In May 1943 Dönitz lost a staggering 41 U-boats while only 264,853 tons of shipping was sunk. Such losses were unsustainable, and the wolfpacks were recalled. Although the Allies had won the Battle of the Atlantic, German submarines continued to fight and periodically claimed Pyrrhic victories right up until the end of the war.

### Whither the wolfpack

The legend and lore of the wolfpack conjures up great tales of danger and derring-do. Despite Churchill’s concerns, a closer look at wolfpack performances may lead observers to draw conclusions that are markedly different from those a post-war generation of historians has traditionally embraced.

U-boat forays were never mounted in war-winning numbers, although in the spring of 1941 their sorties were enough to raise considerable concern. Dönitz placed his emphasis on tactical solutions to problems, while the implications and benefits of overarching technological advances apparently escaped him, ultimately proving fatal to the wolfpack offensive.

While they concentrated U-boat striking power, wolfpacks also presented multiple targets in a compact operational zone as convoy escorts and other countermeasures steadily grew in lethality. Wolfpack operations depended on radio communication, often compromising surprise and summoning swift retribution. Torpedo malfunctions and limited improvements in U-boat technical performance drove Dönitz and his senior commanders, as well as captains and crews with their lives on the line, to distraction. Then there was the vastness of the Atlantic itself. Allied

convoys could still sail the sea undetected. Opportunities were lost and with them the Battle of the Atlantic.

The numbers speak for themselves. Captured U-boat war diaries revealed the startling reality that many German submarines spent entire patrols without making contact with a convoy. Fewer than 800 combat patrols – under 30 per cent of the 2,700 sorties conducted – actually produced contact. Only 30 of nearly 3,300 merchantmen bound for British ports were sunk during the first eight months of 1942. During the first 42 months of the war, over 70 per cent of the ships sunk by U-boats were either sailing alone or lagging behind their assigned convoys. Of the 620 ships sunk while transiting in convoys, only 16 were lost when the convoys were protected by both naval escort and air cover. In sharp contrast, 65 per cent of all U-boat losses in World War II were inflicted by convoy escorts.

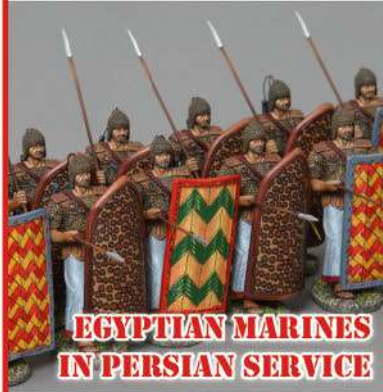
Without doubt, the wolfpack earned its place in history. However, an unbiased evaluation of its performance strongly suggests a less than stellar record – one that never really brought Britain to the brink of defeat. Nevertheless, the exploits and sacrifice of those who fought the Battle of the Atlantic, both Allied and Axis, raised the wolfpack to mythical status, and these intrepid men are worthy of remembrance.

Images: Alamy, Getty





# THOMAS GUNN



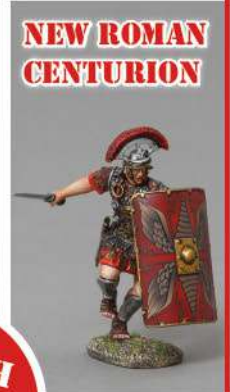
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## ZERO HOUR Z DAY 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 1916

XIII Corps Operations between Maricourt and Mametz

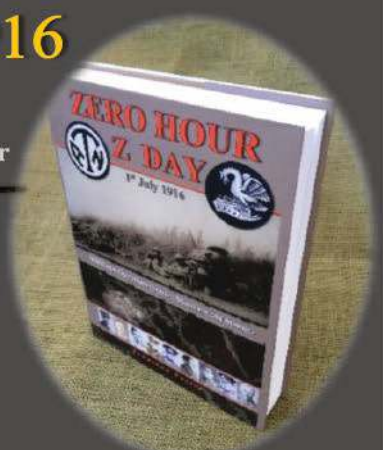
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The author, with 10-years of research, chronicles in greater detail than ever before the story of XIII Corps and the successful assaults by 30<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Divisions. As the only Corps to achieve all its objectives on 1 July 1916, the book seeks to determine why this success was attained, when so many other units along the front barely crossed No-Man's-Land. Using previously unseen material and utilising untold accounts he analyses the build-up, preparations, intelligence, weapons, tactics, training, rehearsals and attack undertaken at Zero Hour, Z Day between the villages of Maricourt and Mametz.

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# U-48

# TY

WORDS MIKE HASKEW

The German submarine U-48 was the most successful weapon of its type deployed during World War II

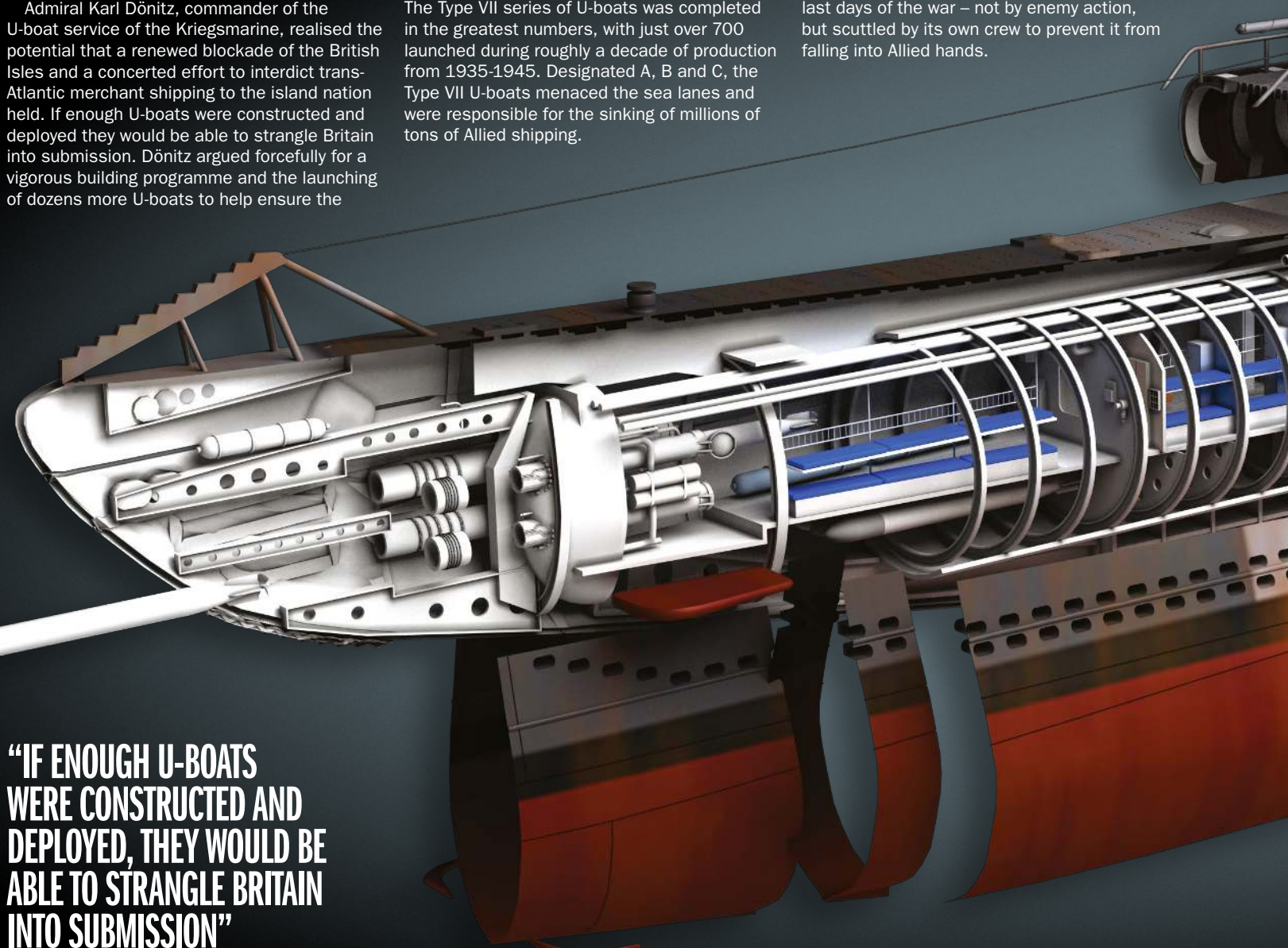
**D**espite the fact that unrestricted submarine warfare had brought the British Isles to near collapse during World War I, the German navy of World War II, the Kriegsmarine, had only 56 operational U-boats (Unterseebooten, or undersea boats) when the conflict erupted in September 1939.

Admiral Karl Dönitz, commander of the U-boat service of the Kriegsmarine, realised the potential that a renewed blockade of the British Isles and a concerted effort to interdict trans-Atlantic merchant shipping to the island nation held. If enough U-boats were constructed and deployed they would be able to strangle Britain into submission. Dönitz argued forcefully for a vigorous building programme and the launching of dozens more U-boats to help ensure the

ultimate victory. However, when World War II began the Kriegsmarine was woefully short of his goal.

Nevertheless, German submarines indeed wrought significant damage on British shipping once again, and the development of a second generation of modern, sleek undersea hunters had been ongoing during the interwar years. The Type VII series of U-boats was completed in the greatest numbers, with just over 700 launched during roughly a decade of production from 1935-1945. Designated A, B and C, the Type VII U-boats menaced the sea lanes and were responsible for the sinking of millions of tons of Allied shipping.

The most successful submarine of World War II in terms of ships and tonnage sunk was the Type VII-B U-48, launched on 8 March 1939 and commissioned six weeks later. Already at sea when the conflict broke out, the U-48 survived a dozen war patrols under three commanders, served as a training boat and was sunk in the spring of 1945 during the last days of the war – not by enemy action, but scuttled by its own crew to prevent it from falling into Allied hands.



**"IF ENOUGH U-BOATS WERE CONSTRUCTED AND DEPLOYED, THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO STRANGLE BRITAIN INTO SUBMISSION"**



# U-48 TYPE VII-B

"THE MOST SUCCESSFUL SUBMARINE OF  
WORLD WAR II IN TERMS OF SHIPS AND  
TONNAGE SUNK WAS THE TYPE VII-B U-48,  
LAUNCHED ON 8 MARCH 1939"



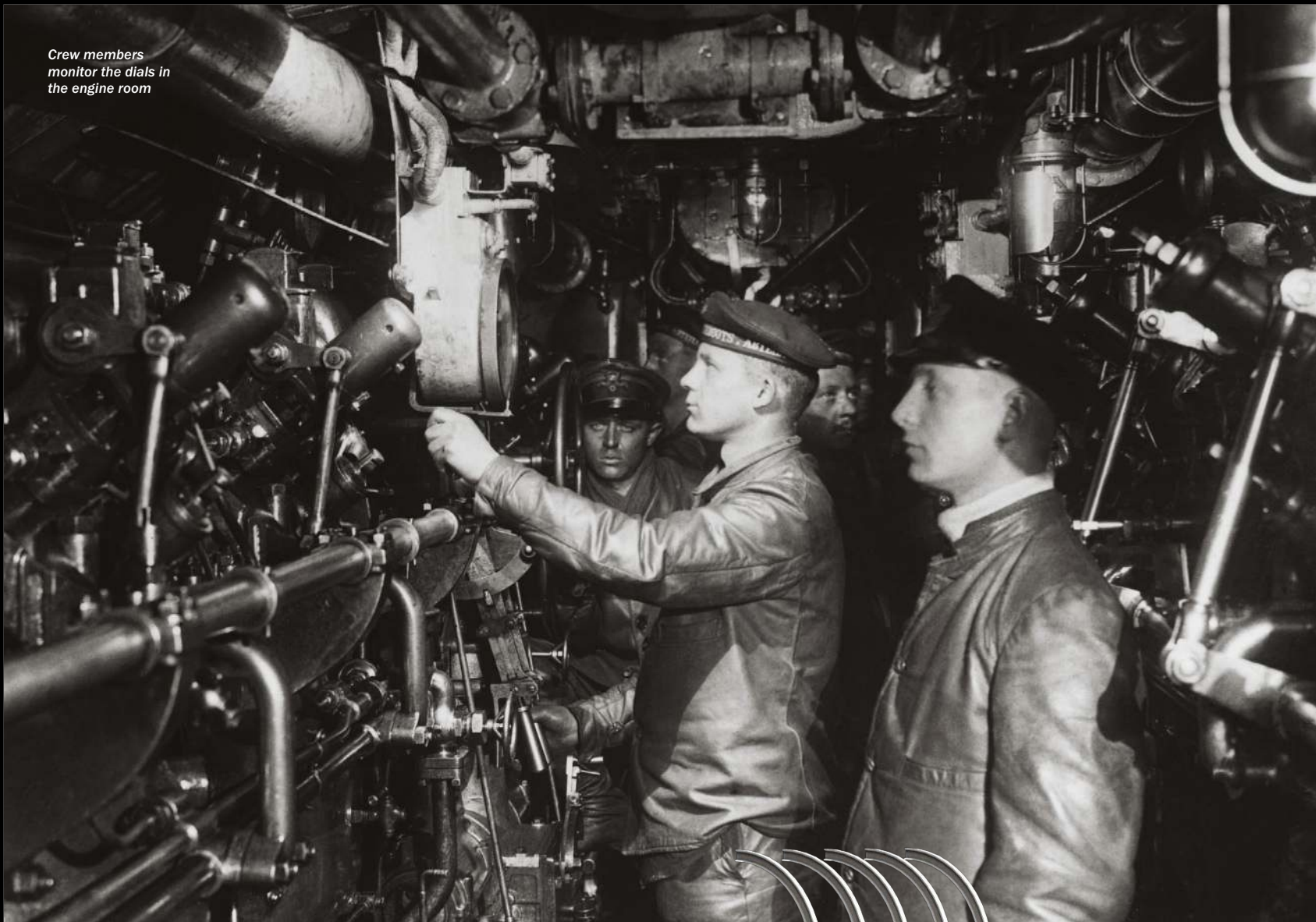
## U-48 TYPE VII-B

**COMMISSIONED:** 22 APRIL 1939 **ORIGIN:** NAZI GERMANY  
**LENGTH:** 66.5M (218.2FT) **CREW:** 44  
**RANGE:** 6,500 NM SURFACED; 90 NM SUBMERGED  
**DISPLACEMENT:** 753 TONS SURFACED  
**ENGINE:** 2 X KRUPP GERMANIAWERFT DIESEL  
 ENGINES SURFACED; 2 X ALLEGMEINE ELEKTRICITÄTS-  
 GESELLSCHAFT AG (AEG) ELECTRIC MOTORS SUBMERGED  
**PRIMARY WEAPONS:** 4 X 53.3CM (21IN) AND 1 X 53.3CM  
 STERN TORPEDO TUBES; 14 TORPEDOES  
**SECONDARY WEAPONS:** 88MM SK C/35 NAVAL GUN; 20MM  
 C/30 ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN

Illustrations: Alex Peng



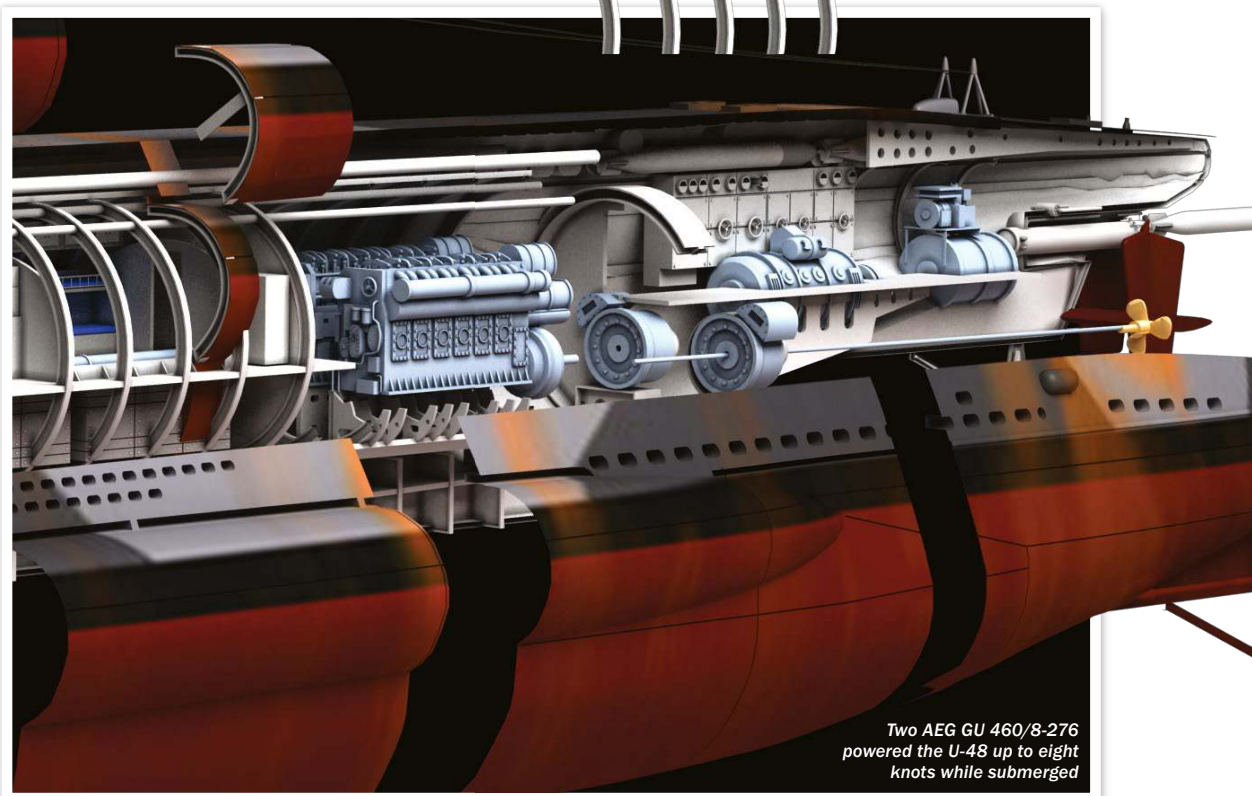
Crew members monitor the dials in the engine room



## ENGINE

The pair of supercharged four-stroke, six-cylinder Germaniawerft F46 diesel engines that powered the U-48 while surfaced generated up to 3,160 shaft horsepower and a top speed of 17.9 knots. The engine was widely produced prior to and during World War II. While running submerged U-48 was capable of a top speed of eight knots with two AEG GU 460/8-276 double acting electric motors producing 740 shaft horsepower. Diesel exhaust ports were mounted on the sides of the hull and designed to vent exhaust downward to minimise the submarine's visibility on the surface.

**“WHILE RUNNING SUBMERGED U-48 WAS CAPABLE OF A TOP SPEED OF EIGHT KNOTS”**



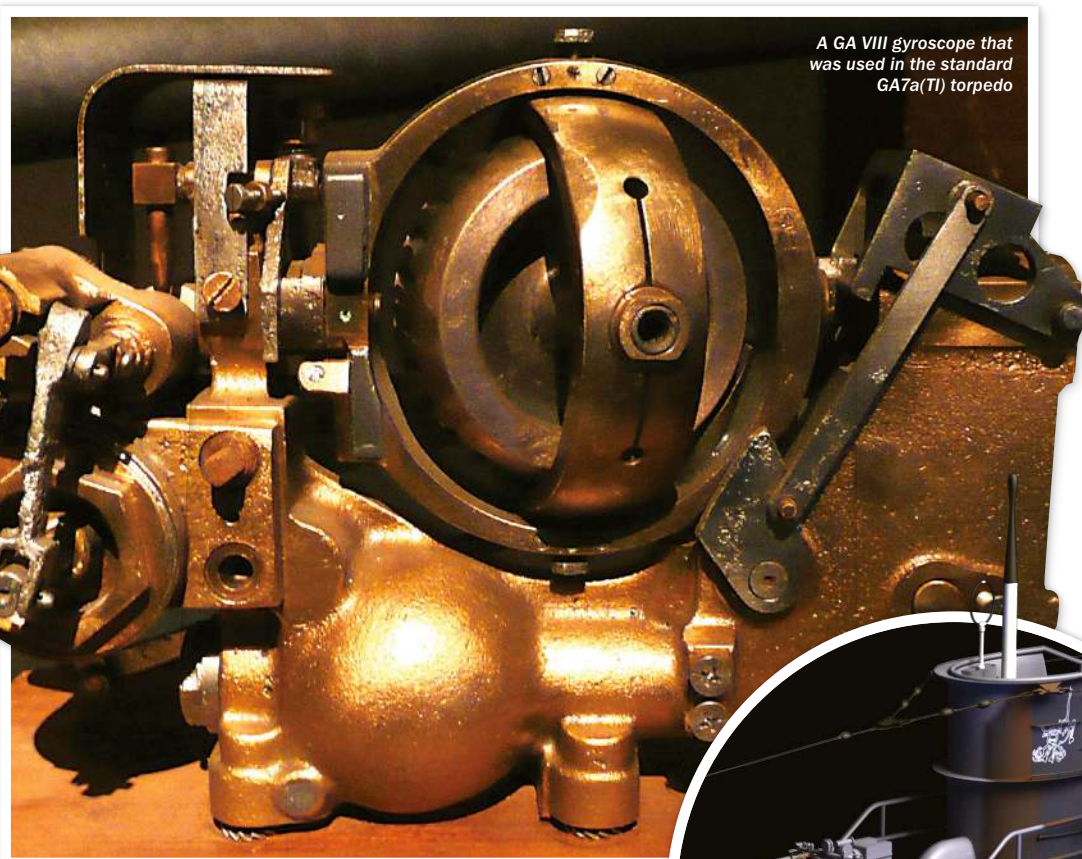
Two AEG GU 460/8-276 powered the U-48 up to eight knots while submerged



## ARMAMENT

Early in World War II the standard German torpedo was the G7a(TI), a variable-speed, steam-powered weapon that was controlled by a gyroscope. Speed was determined by preset pressure levels of 30, 40 or 44 knots. The 44-knot setting was used only by surface craft. A setting of 40 knots yielded a range of 7,500 metres (24,606 feet). The torpedo was armed with a warhead of 280 kilograms (617 pounds) of explosive. The Type VII-B was also capable of carrying and laying up to 39 mines. Secondary armament consisted of the 88mm SK C/35 deck gun and the 20mm C/30 anti-aircraft gun.

**“THE STANDARD GERMAN TORPEDO WAS THE G7A(TI), A VARIABLE SPEED, STEAM-POWERED WEAPON THAT WAS CONTROLLED BY A GYROSCOPE”**



A GA VIII gyroscope that was used in the standard GA7a(TI) torpedo



Above: U-48 had a secondary armament of an 88mm SK C/35 deck gun



A U-boat crew personalises one of the 14 torpedoes that made up the main armament



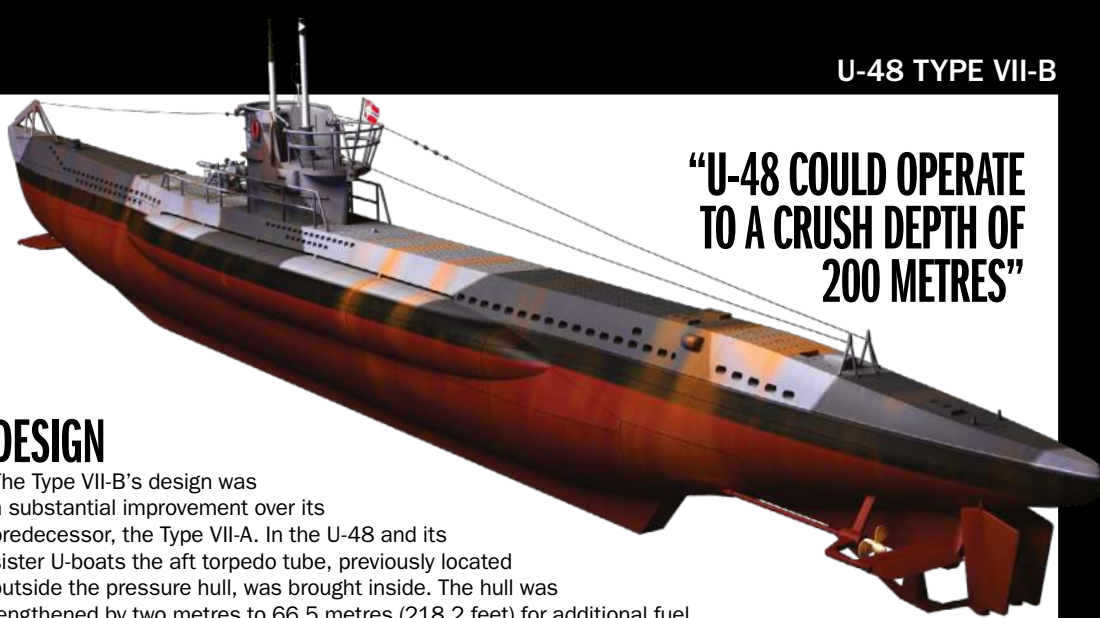
**“THE INTERIOR OF THE TYPE VII SUBMARINE  
WAS CRAMPED AS INDIVIDUAL COMFORT  
WAS NOT A PRIORITY”**

*No activity on such a tight, enclosed vessel was easy, so loading a 7-metre (23-foot) long torpedo was a challenge for the crew*

## **INTERIOR**

The interior of the Type VII submarine was cramped, as individual comfort was not a priority. The forward torpedo room and sleeping area for junior sailors were located at the bow. Further aft, senior crew quarters and the captain's cabin were atop a separate area where the batteries that powered the electric motors were stowed. The main control room was amidships with the navigator's table, helm control and diving controls. The conning tower was directly above, housing the attack computer, periscope and the exit hatch to the exterior. Further aft were the sleeping area for junior noncommissioned officers, galley, aft head, pantry, batteries, engine room and aft torpedo room.





**“U-48 COULD OPERATE TO A CRUSH DEPTH OF 200 METRES”**

## DESIGN

The Type VII-B's design was a substantial improvement over its predecessor, the Type VII-A. In the U-48 and its sister U-boats the aft torpedo tube, previously located outside the pressure hull, was brought inside. The hull was lengthened by two metres to 66.5 metres (218.2 feet) for additional fuel capacity, and the steering system was enhanced with two rudders for improved turning. Superchargers gave the diesel engines a slight increase in top speed to 17.9 knots surfaced and 8 knots submerged. The U-48 could operate to a crush depth of 200 metres (656 feet) and was of single pressure hull construction.

*U-48 was one of 706 Type VII U-boats built before and during WWII. Despite its improvements, the Type VIIs were ultimately too limited and too few to win the Battle of the Atlantic*

## SERVICE HISTORY

**U-48 WAS UNSURPASSED IN SINKING ALLIED SHIPPING AND ALSO SURVIVED NUMEROUS ATTACKS BY CONVOY ESCORTS**

The Type VII-B U-48 was laid down in March 1937 at the Germaniawerft yards at Kiel, Germany, and commissioned on 22 April 1939. During its 22-month wartime career the U-48 sank or damaged 55 ships totalling 328,414 tons, a record unsurpassed in World War II.

The U-48 operated in two wolfpacks during the early months of the war and survived serious damage in numerous encounters with Allied convoy escort vessels. It spent 325 days at sea and completed its war patrols under three commanders – Kapitänleutnant Herbert Schultze, Korvettenkapitan Hans Rudolf Rösing, and Kapitänleutnant Heinrich Bleichrodt. Each commander received the Knight's Cross, as did officers Reinhard Suhren and Erich Zürn.

The U-48 achieved its first kill on 5 September 1939, just two days after Britain and France declared war on Germany, sinking the 4,853-ton merchant vessel Royal Sceptre with its 88mm deck gun.

After sinking the 5,055-ton Winkleigh on 8 September, U-48 dispatched the 4,869-ton Firby three days later and radioed the message, “Transmit to Mr Churchill. I have sunk the British steamer Firby. Posit 59°40'N 13°50'W. Save the crew if you please, German submarine.”

During its seventh war patrol U-48 sank the 1,060-ton sloop of war HMS Dundee on 15 September 1940, which was followed on the 18 September with a tragic event of World War II. With Bleichrodt in command, the U-48 torpedoed the steamer SS City of Benares, which was participating in a programme to evacuate British children to Canada. 90 children were aboard the ship and 77 died. A total of 258 crew and passengers perished.

The U-48 concluded its last patrol on 21 June 1941 and returned to Kiel. It was subsequently transferred to the 26th Bootflotille at Pillau and then to the Third U-boat Lehr Division to be used as a training craft. The boat was scuttled by its crew on 3 May 1945 to prevent it falling into Allied hands.

*The sinking of SS City of Benares by U-48 caused outrage and was held up by the British as an example of Nazi Germany's abhorrence*

Images: Mary Evans, Getty

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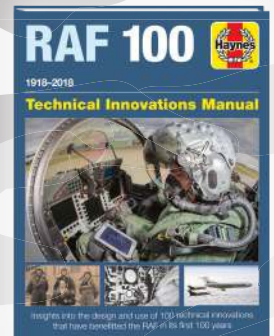
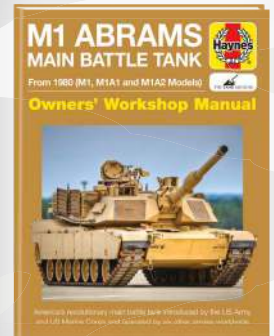
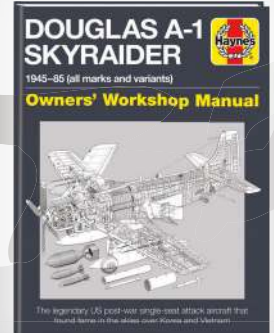
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**HITLER'S FOULEST DEED—THE MERCY SHIP MURDER**

When an Atlantic liner carrying evacuee children to Canada was torpedoed by a U-boat in a gale, 600 miles from land, eighty-five out of 98 children lost their lives. The death roll totalled 306 out of the 421 passengers and crew aboard. Our artist's impression shows a passenger towing a raft—carrying adults and children—out of the suction of the heeling liner. The people on the raft and their rescuer were later picked up by a British warship after many hours at sea.



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Great Battles

# IA DRANG

The US First Air Cavalry sought to oust the North Vietnamese from the Central Highlands of South Vietnam – what followed was a bloody battle that pitted elite infantry forces against each other

WORDS WILLIAM E. WELSH

**“MORE COMMUNISTS CLAD  
IN MUSTARD-COLOURED  
UNIFORMS ARRIVED TO JOIN  
THE FIREFIGHT”**





US Army Major Bruce Crandall, who received the Medal of Honor for bravery during the battle, departs in his UH-1D helicopter after dropping off a load of riflemen at LZ X-Ray



## PLEIKU PROVINCE, SOUTH VIETNAM 14-17 NOVEMBER 1965

Less than two hours after landing near the Cambodian border on 14 November 1965, an American 'Air Cavalry' battalion made contact with North Vietnamese regulars operating from a base camp in a mountain stronghold inside South Vietnam. In a sweep up a nearby mountain, an American rifle platoon spotted a squad of enemy troops that appeared to be retreating along a mountain trail and gave chase. The jungle swallowed the Americans, and they lost contact with their main force.



50 North Vietnamese came charging down the trail towards the US troops. Rounds hissed through the trees. Two American machine gun teams swung into action, and a grenadier pumped rounds from his M79 'Thumper' into the enemy's flank. More Communists clad in mustard-coloured uniforms arrived to join the firefight.

The young lieutenant leading the American platoon had committed the blunder that he had been warned minutes before not to commit. His company commander over the tactical radio had said: "Be careful, I don't want you to get pinned down or sucked into anything." In his desire to engage the enemy, the eager young officer had done precisely that. His platoon would have to hold on until help came – if it arrived before they were wiped out.

The war between the communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the American-backed Republic of Vietnam, better known as North Vietnam and South Vietnam respectively, entered a new phase in 1965. Four years earlier, the US had 'stood up' its Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. Among MACV's many responsibilities was ensuring that the South Vietnamese troops had American military advisors to coach them on battle tactics.

When it became apparent that South Vietnamese forces could not defeat the Viet Cong insurgency, the Americans brought in their own ground troops. At the same time, the North Vietnamese Politburo had decided to send regular army troops into action in South Vietnam. These troops arrived in the south by

### OPPOSING FORCES

	<b>VS</b>	
<b>PEOPLE'S ARMY OF NORTH VIETNAM</b>		<b>US ARMY</b>
<b>UNIT:</b> B-3 Front		<b>UNIT:</b> First Cavalry Division (Airmobile)
<b>LEADERS:</b> Brig. Gen. Chu Huy Man		<b>LEADERS:</b> Lt. Col. Harold Moore
<b>INFANTRY:</b> 6,000		<b>INFANTRY:</b> 1,500
<b>HEAVY ARTILLERY:</b> 0		<b>HEAVY ARTILLERY:</b> 12 105mm howitzers



way of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, a vast road and trail network built by labourers from the north that ran through eastern Laos and Cambodia.

Among the elite US ground forces that arrived in 1965 was Major General Harry Kinnard's 16,000-strong First Cavalry (Airmobile) Division, which established its base at An Khe in Binh Dinh Province. The division was built around the novel concept of moving troops before and during battle by helicopter.

The helicopter that was the mainstay of the air mobility concept was the ubiquitous utility helicopter, the UH-1, nicknamed 'Huey'. At this point in the Vietnam War it came in two versions: the elongated UH-1D, known as a 'Slick' transported troops, and the shorter UH-1B armed with rocket launchers and miniguns was known as a 'Hog'. Slicks ordinarily could carry their four-man crew as well as eight infantrymen, but the thin air of the highlands strained the engine, and in that altitude it could transport only five infantrymen.

After its arrival in September, the division conducted sweeps around its sprawling helicopter base at An Khe to clear the area of Viet Cong guerillas. Far bigger opportunities awaited it, though. When the North Vietnamese attacked the US Special Forces camp at Plei Me in the Central Highlands on October 19, MACV Commander General William Westmoreland ordered Kinnard to engage and destroy enemy forces. At first the Americans believed they were fighting the Viet Cong but eventually realised they were up against well-trained, highly disciplined North Vietnamese regulars.

The Central Highlands had long been a sanctuary for communist operations in South Vietnam. The highlands "are a run of erratic

**“AT FIRST THE AMERICANS BELIEVED THEY WERE FIGHTING THE VIET CONG BUT EVENTUALLY REALISED THEY WERE UP AGAINST WELL-TRAINED, HIGHLY DISCIPLINED NORTH VIETNAMESE REGULARS”**

mountain ranges, gnarled valleys, jungle-strewn ravines and abrupt plains where Montagnard villages cluster, thin and disappear as the terrain steepens,” wrote war correspondent Michael Herr. As such, they offered the North Vietnamese both a training ground and a sanctuary to recover from battle. For the American troops, who had little knowledge of the rugged high country and would have had great difficulty penetrating it without their helicopters, the highlands were “spooky beyond belief,” said Herr.

Running the show for the communist People's Army of Vietnam in the Central Highlands in 1965 was Brigadier General Chu Huy Man, the commander of the division-sized B-3 Front. His three regiments were the 32nd, 33rd and 66th regiments. Hanoi wanted Man to destroy the Plei Me Special Forces Camp and any South Vietnamese forces sent to support it. Afterwards, his troops were to advance east to the coast, thereby splitting South Vietnam in half. But when Hanoi learned

that the newly arrived First Cavalry Division (Airmobile) stationed at An Khe blocked a drive to the coast, it revised the final step. The North Vietnamese regulars were not to try to reach the coast: instead, they were to kill Americans.

American air power broke attempts by the 32nd and 33rd regiments to capture the Special Forces Camp and to destroy the South Vietnamese relief force. After a severe mauling, Brigadier General Man withdrew his forces west into the Ia Drang Valley, which bordered the Chu Pong Mountains.

Kinnard sent his reconnaissance force, the First Squadron of the Ninth Cavalry, to scour the Ia Drang Valley in search of the enemy base camp. The Ninth Cavalry used light observation helicopters with large Plexiglas bubble canopies to peer into the foliage below for signs of the enemy. When they spied something promising, an aero-rifle platoon was deployed to explore the situation on foot. During the first week of November, the squadron found evidence indicating that the Communists' base camp was situated on or near the Chu Pong mountains. Their reconnaissance was accurate, because the three North Vietnamese regiments were deployed on the eastern slopes of the mountains, as well as in Ia Drang Valley to the north east.

Anticipating a large battle, Kinnard ordered Colonel Thomas Brown to have his Third Brigade ready for a helicopter assault into Ia Drang Valley. The brigade comprised Lieutenant Colonel Harold Moore's First Battalion, Seventh Cavalry; Lieutenant Colonel Robert McDade's Second Battalion, Seventh Cavalry; and Lieutenant Colonel Robert Tully's Second Brigade, Fifth Cavalry.

*North Vietnamese soldiers fighting to liberate South Vietnam underwent rigorous training in battlefield tactics*





**10 B-52 STRIKES**

On the afternoon of the third day US B-52 bombers from Guam conduct bombing runs against North Vietnamese forces in the Chu Pong Mountains. The tactical B-52 strikes mark the beginning of Operation Arc Light. The Arc Light attacks against the Chu Pong mountains continue for the next five days.

**03 ISOLATED PLATOON**

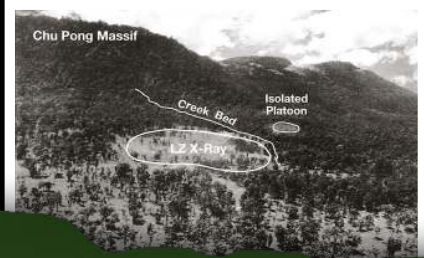
Elements of the 33rd and 66th regiments of the North Vietnamese B-3 Front stream downhill to attack Bravo Company. They encircle Bravo Company's Second Platoon. In the process of forming a defensive position, the platoon loses one of its two invaluable M60 machine guns.

**04 FAILED RELIEF ATTEMPT**

By late afternoon all four companies of the First Battalion, Seventh Cavalry have arrived at LZ X-Ray. An attempt to rescue the isolated platoon on the mountainside fails in the face of strong enemy resistance.

**08 SUCCESSFUL RESCUE MISSION**

Two fresh battalions arrive by midday. With his strength tripled, US Army Lt. Col. Harold Moore has enough men to hold the landing zone and also rescue the isolated platoon. A relief force rescues the encircled American platoon on the afternoon of 15 November. Of the 29 men from the platoon, only seven avoided serious injury. Nine died and 13 were wounded.



LT. HERRICK'S ISOLATED PLATOON

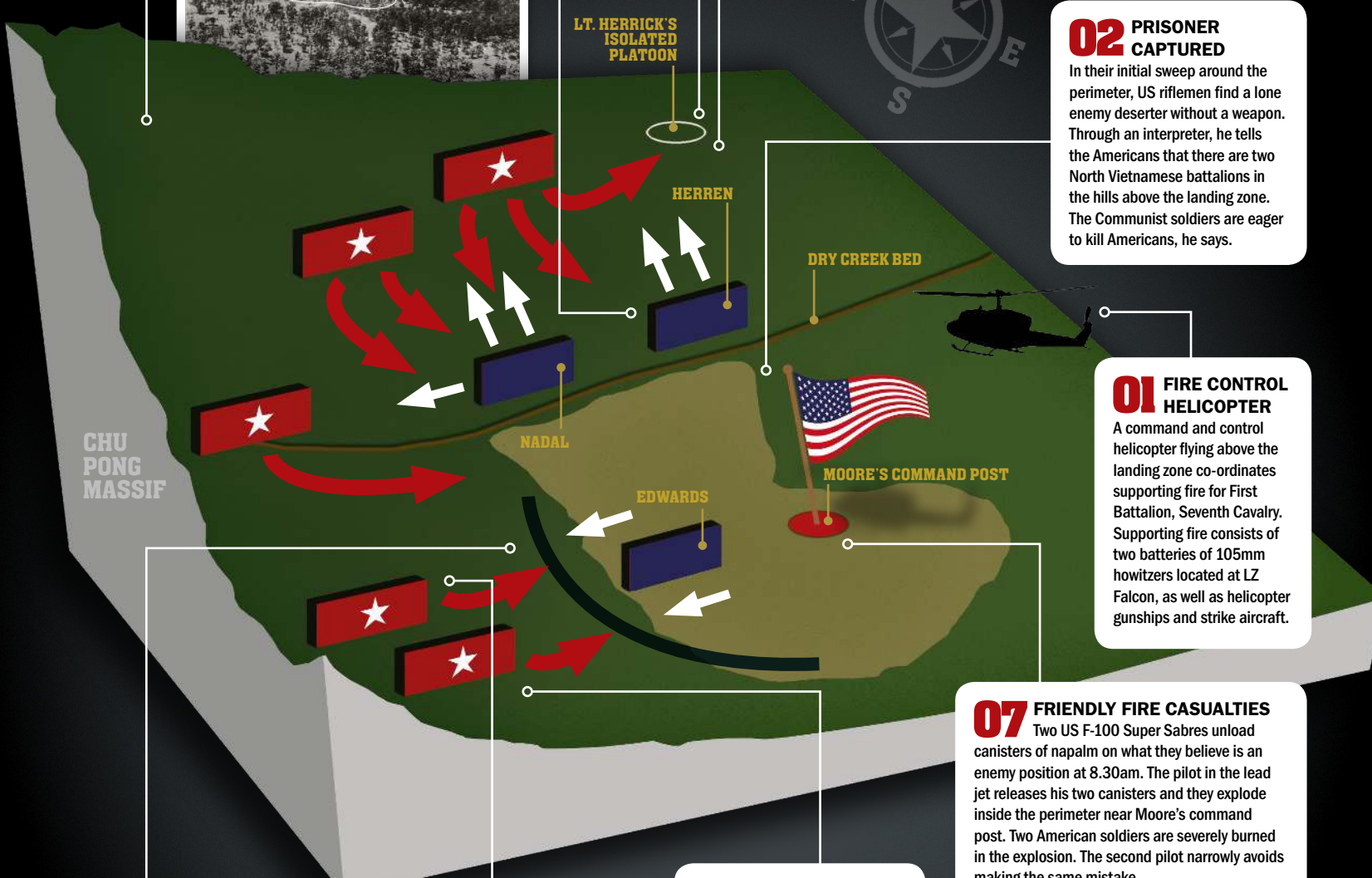


**02 PRISONER CAPTURED**

In their initial sweep around the perimeter, US riflemen find a lone enemy deserter without a weapon. Through an interpreter, he tells the Americans that there are two North Vietnamese battalions in the hills above the landing zone. The Communist soldiers are eager to kill Americans, he says.

**01 FIRE CONTROL HELICOPTER**

A command and control helicopter flying above the landing zone co-ordinates supporting fire for First Battalion, Seventh Cavalry. Supporting fire consists of two batteries of 105mm howitzers located at LZ Falcon, as well as helicopter gunships and strike aircraft.



**05 ATTACK ON THE LANDING ZONE**

Two companies of North Vietnamese attack the landing zone from the south in an attempt to penetrate the perimeter. Charlie Company holds its ground, and this makes it possible for the helicopters to continue landing more troops and ammunition throughout the afternoon. By late afternoon, all four of Moore's companies have safely arrived in the landing zone.

**06 ENTRENCHED FOE**

By the morning of 15 November many of the Communist soldiers are entrenched outside of LZ X-Ray in spider holes. These shoulder-deep, camouflaged positions offer protection against artillery barrages, bombs and rockets, with which the Americans hammer the enemy positions.

**09 FINAL ASSAULT**

The Americans string flare traps on the second night to alert them to a night-time attack. The North Vietnamese attack before dawn on 16 November, setting off the trip wires, thus giving the Americans warning that an attack is in progress. After attempting four times in the early morning to breach the south side of the perimeter, the North Vietnamese break contact for the final time.

**07 FRIENDLY FIRE CASUALTIES**

Two US F-100 Super Sabres unload canisters of napalm on what they believe is an enemy position at 8.30am. The pilot in the lead jet releases his two canisters and they explode inside the perimeter near Moore's command post. Two American soldiers are severely burned in the explosion. The second pilot narrowly avoids making the same mistake.

**“CHARLIE COMPANY HOLDS ITS GROUND, AND THIS MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR THE HELICOPTERS TO CONTINUE LANDING MORE TROOPS AND AMMUNITION”**



*A weary sergeant of Alpha Company First Battalion, Seventh Cavalry has the '1,000-yard stare' characteristic of soldiers who have seen protracted fighting*

**"THEY WERE DAMNED GOOD SOLDIERS, USED COVER AND CONCEALMENT TO PERFECTION AND WERE DEADLY SHOTS"**



Kinnard selected Moore's battalion to spearhead the assault scheduled for 14 November. Moore was the best choice for the mission because he had extensive combat experience from the Korean War. Based on the earlier findings, Kinnard decided to land Moore's battalion at the north eastern base of the Chu Pongs on the assumption that he would be landing behind the North Vietnamese, and therefore could cut off their retreat. As subsequent events would prove, Moore landed among the enemy, not behind it.

### The cavalry arrives

LZ X-Ray was a narrow, 30-metre-long (100-foot) clearing with chest-high, yellow-brown elephant grass, scattered trees and massive termite mounds. The open woodlands at the base of the mountains gave way to thick jungle as soon as they began ascending the steep slopes.

Moore had 16 Huey Slicks to ferry his troops to LZ X-Ray. The clearing could only accommodate eight Slicks at a time, so the other eight would have to hover nearby until the first group had exited the landing zone. The helicopter pilots would have to make half a dozen 'lifts' to get the 440 men on the ground, a process that would take most of the first day.

Each US Army rifleman carried 300 rounds of ammunition for his newly issued M16 assault rifle, and each M79 grenadier had 36 rounds. Each rifle platoon had two M60 machine guns, each of which had at least four boxes of ammunition. In addition, each squad had two portable anti-tank weapon rockets to destroy enemy bunkers.

Moore's men assembled late in the morning near Plei Me for the shuttle to LZ X-Ray. The

first lift carried Moore and Bravo Company. The 22.5-kilometre (14-mile) flight from Plei Me to LZ X-Ray took 13 minutes. At 10.35am the choppers rose skyward in a swirl of red dust. A few minutes out the pilots took their 'birds' down to treetop level for the final approach. It was dry season in the mountains, and the streams that snaked across the plateaus were bone dry. The landing zone was veiled in grey smoke from artillery shells and aerial rocket artillery designed to kill any enemy soldiers in or near the clearing. The barrage stopped just seconds before the Slicks of the first lift flew down into the clearing.

Moore and his staff set up their command post next to a large termite mound. Dry ravines bracketed the clearing on the west and north. Shortly after noon the second and third lifts delivered more soldiers. To ensure that the helicopters could continue to land safely through the afternoon, Moore wanted to engage the enemy outside of the landing zone, not in it. Leaving Alpha Company to guard the landing zone, Moore ordered Captain John Herrin to explore the lower slope of the 457-metre (1,500-foot) mountain to the north west that loomed over the landing zone.

The North Vietnamese were waiting for the Americans. The Communist soldiers, who were drawn mainly from the rural peasantry, were patient, tenacious and tough. Each carried a Soviet-designed AK-47 rifle and three 'potato masher' grenades. Their platoons had machine guns and hand-held rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

Their tactical doctrine called for inflicting heavy casualties on the Americans at the beginning of a battle and then breaking contact before they could be taken under fire by enemy

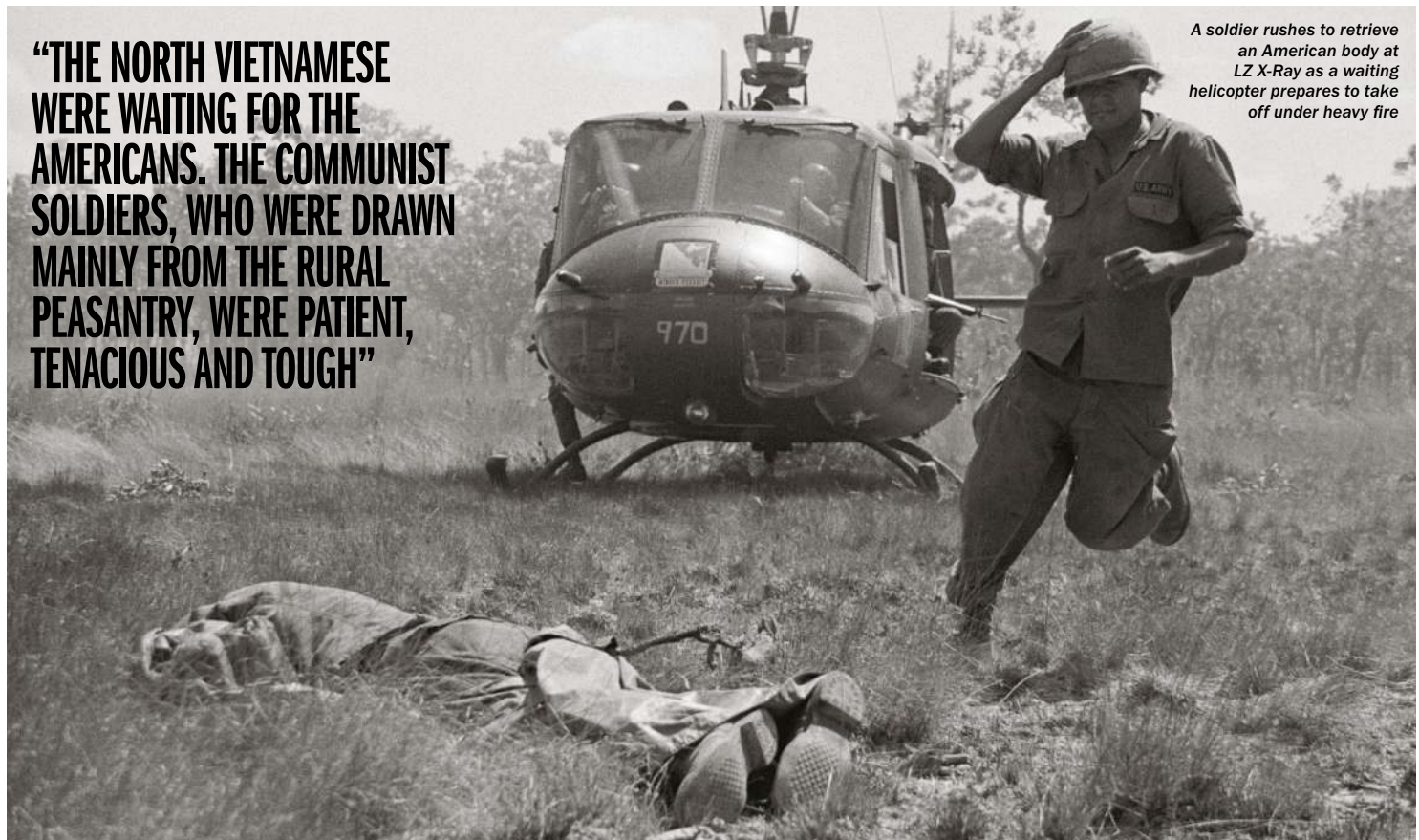
long-range artillery or air strikes. If they had to fight a sustained battle, they fought from concealed positions close to the enemy so that the Americans would be reluctant to call in supporting fire for fear of causing friendly casualties. This tactic was known as "clinging to the belt".

Captain John Herren's Bravo Company ascended the mountain with two platoons abreast and one behind. Al Devney's First Platoon held the left, Lieutenant Henry Herrick's Second Platoon held the right, and Lieutenant Dennis Deal's Third Platoon brought up the rear. Alerted by a mountaintop observation post that the Americans had landed, the North Vietnamese streamed down the mountain in large numbers.

Bravo Company ran headlong into large numbers of enemy troops just 30 minutes after it had left the landing zone. The Communists quickly pinned down Devney's men, yet the savvy platoon leader maintained contact with the landing zone.

"They were damned good soldiers, used cover and concealment to perfection and were deadly shots," Moore said of the enemy. As soon as the firefight commenced, devastating American firepower struck the mountainside. In addition to the torrent of howitzer shells that screamed down on them, the North Vietnamese troops were pounded throughout the long afternoon with rockets, bombs and napalm.

To counter the American strike aircraft, the North Vietnamese on the mountain fired 12.7mm Russian-made heavy machine guns that they used as anti-aircraft weapons. In mid-afternoon they finally succeeded in downing an A1-E Skyraider that crashed in a fireball north of LZ X-Ray.



**"THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WERE WAITING FOR THE AMERICANS. THE COMMUNIST SOLDIERS, WHO WERE DRAWN MAINLY FROM THE RURAL PEASANTRY, WERE PATIENT, TENACIOUS AND TOUGH"**

*A soldier rushes to retrieve an American body at LZ X-Ray as a waiting helicopter prepares to take off under heavy fire*





*An air cavalry platoon sweeps through the elephant grass firing M16 rifles during heavy fighting at LZ X-Ray*

The Communist soldiers quickly got behind Herrick's platoon, and it lost contact with the rest of Bravo Company. Engaged in a full-throttle firefight, Herrick's three squads pulled back shortly before mid-afternoon to a knoll on a ridge to await rescue. Their perimeter was only 23 metres (75 feet) in diameter.

A torrent of small arms fire swept the knoll where Herrick's men lay prone. If they knelt, they were struck by AK-47 or automatic weapons rounds. The Americans laid their M16s flat and fired on full automatic. While establishing an effective defence on the knoll, Herrick was killed by an enemy round. Command eventually devolved, after two sergeants were killed in quick succession, to a third sergeant named Clyde Savage. In an effort to keep the enemy at bay, Savage called in air support and artillery fire that landed within 46 metres (150 feet) of the platoon's position to keep the enemy at bay.

"The bullets were clipping all around us, hitting men and trees and cutting the grass," said Savage. "There was a lot of fire coming in on us and they had people coming up at us, but they had a hell of a lot of fire coming down on them."

While the fighting on the mountainside raged, the Huey Slicks continued to arrive with additional platoons. Moore sent Captain 'Tony' Nadal with his Alpha Platoon troops to extend the battlefront on the mountain. They took up a position on the left flank of Bravo Company. In so doing, they blocked the Communists from striking the landing zone directly from the mountain.

Moore retained Captain Bob Edwards's Charlie Company at the landing zone as a reserve. Charlie Company deployed on the south side of the perimeter to prevent the enemy from hooking around the Americans to the south and overrunning the landing zone.

Moore told his immediate superior, Third Brigade Commander Colonel Tim Brown, that he was hard-pressed by the enemy and could use another company of soldiers. Realising the dire nature of the situation, Brown mustered far more reinforcements than Moore requested. But it would take time to get many of them to the battlefield.

While arranging for two full battalions to arrive the following day, Brown gathered the closest reinforcements available to send that afternoon. Captain Myron Diduryk's Bravo Company of Second Battalion, Seventh Cavalry was guarding Brown's headquarters south of Pleiku. Brown ordered Diduryk to prepare his men to fly via helicopter to LZ X-Ray.

Scheduled to arrive the next day on Brown's orders were Lieutenant Colonel McDade's battalion and Lieutenant Colonel Robert Tully's battalion. They would be moved later in the day to landing zones within several miles of LZ X-Ray. While McDade's men would be lifted by helicopter to LZ X-Ray on the morning of the second day, Tully and his men would have to march overland to LZ X-Ray through enemy-controlled territory, where an ambush was a real possibility.

By mid-afternoon the North Vietnamese had begun attacking the landing zone in large numbers. The small clearing was swept by a hailstorm of small arms and automatic weapons fire. North Vietnamese mortar rounds and rocket-propelled grenades exploded inside the perimeter, which forced Moore to suspend helicopter landings for a short time. The last lifts of the day brought in Captain Louis Lefebvre's D Company, which was Moore's heavy weapons company, and Diduryk's rifle company. This gave Moore enough troops to adequately defend his entire perimeter.

The enemy made four unsuccessful attempts to penetrate the perimeter that night. On the mountainside, the encircled platoon benefitted from the support of an AC-47 'Spooky' gunship that circled overhead firing its miniguns outside the platoon's tiny perimeter.

At dawn on 15 November, the second day of battle, a squad patrolling the bush south of the perimeter triggered a premature assault by a company-sized force of North Vietnamese troops. A furious firefight ensued in which Charlie Company was hard-pressed to hold its position.

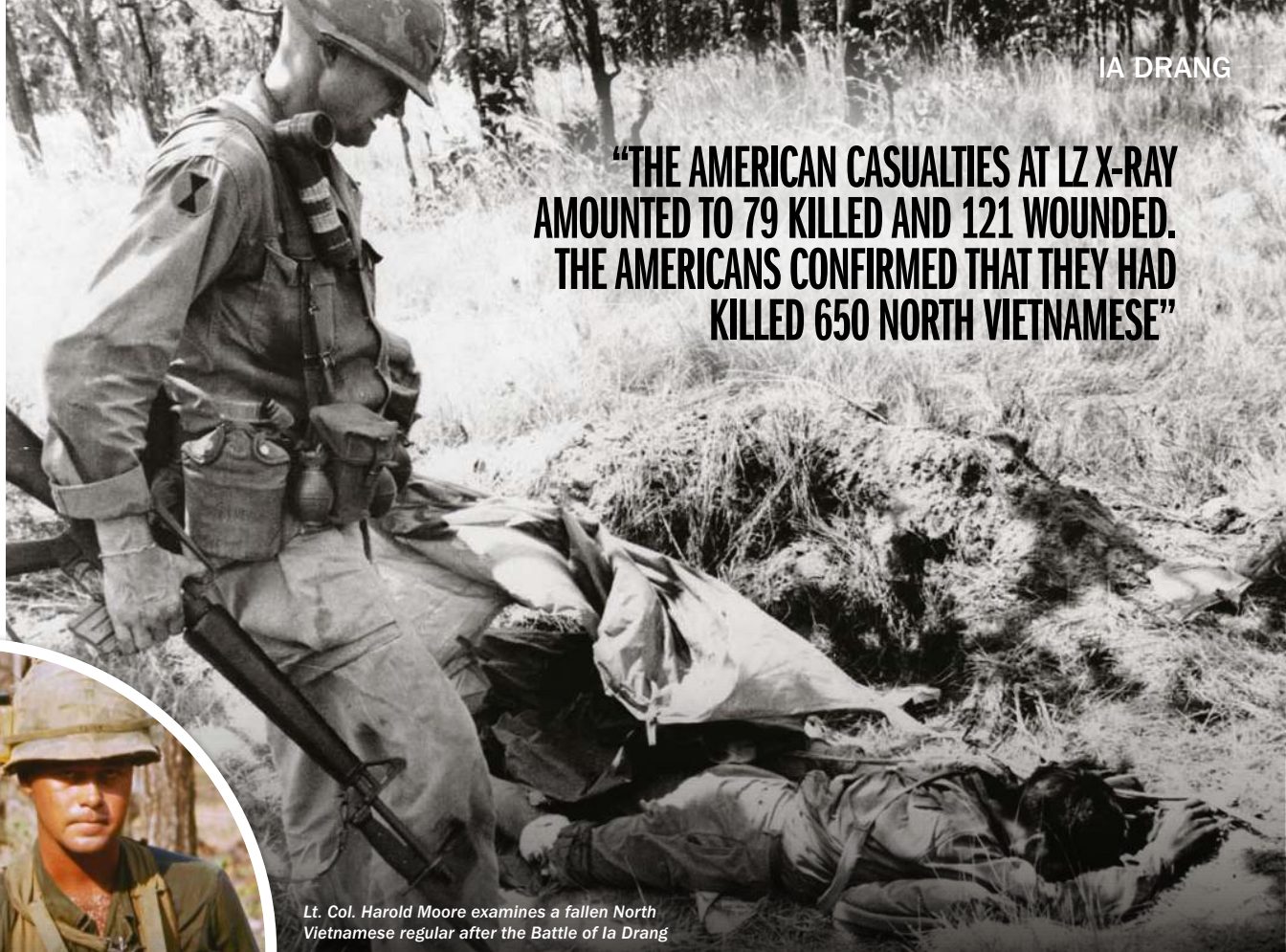
Although he was wounded in the firefight, Charlie Company commander Captain Edwards continued to direct the defence of his section of the perimeter. He pleaded with Moore for reinforcements, but the battalion commander refused. When the situation became even more dire, Moore sent his last reserve, the battalion's reconnaissance platoon, to assist Charlie Company. Hand-to-hand fighting occurred, and the dead of both sides lay alongside each other in the elephant grass.

The North Vietnamese expanded their assault on LZ X-Ray by assailing the north and east sides of the perimeter too. Moore called Brown again by radio, urgently inquiring as to the status of the promised reinforcements. Brown said that Tully's battalion was on its way to join Moore.

Moore ordered each company to pop coloured smoke grenades just outside their position to mark it for the ground-attack aircraft and rocket-firing helicopters. Soon the area outside of the perimeter was rocked by a series of explosions as rockets, high-explosive bombs and napalm fell on Communist positions. The air strikes eventually forced the North Vietnamese to break off their attack. The three-hour fight took a heavy toll on Charlie Company, which lost half of its strength in the fight. Shortly afterwards, Colonel



**“THE AMERICAN CASUALTIES AT LZ X-RAY AMOUNTED TO 79 KILLED AND 121 WOUNDED. THE AMERICANS CONFIRMED THAT THEY HAD KILLED 650 NORTH VIETNAMESE”**



Lt. Col. Harold Moore examines a fallen North Vietnamese regular after the Battle of Ia Drang

Members of the US 1st Air Cavalry, march through forest en route to Chu Phong mountain, in the Ia Drang Valley

Brown made a brief visit to the landing zone to inform Moore that he would be withdrawing his force the following day.

Additional elements of McDade's Second Battalion, Seventh Cavalry arrived in the morning by helicopter, and Tully's battalion arrived safely at noon following a dangerous march through enemy-controlled territory. To avoid an enemy ambush, Tully had spread out his battalion rather than have it march in a single, vulnerable column.

The arrival of a large number of fresh troops put Moore's mind at ease. He dispatched three companies to rescue the isolated battalion. This time the Communists did not contest their advance. The relief force entered the jungle shortly after 1.00pm, and helicopter gunships peppered the area over which they would be advancing with rocket fire.

Two hours after the relief force set out, it returned to the landing zone escorting the seven uninjured soldiers and carrying the wounded in ponchos. They also brought back their fallen comrades. The survivors were caked in blood and dirt. They had the vacant '1,000-yard stare' of battle-weary troops who had narrowly avoided being wiped out by a more numerous enemy. The North Vietnamese troops

made no further attacks that day on the landing zone. Their chance to wipe out Moore's battalion had come and gone.

Helicopters evacuated Moore's troops on 16 November to Pleiku for rest and recovery. The other two battalions of the Third Brigade remained at LZ X-Ray that night. Both battalions departed on foot the morning of 17 November. The two battalions marched together but eventually split up to head for different landing zones. Tully's battalion continued on a north east course for LZ Columbus, while McDade's battalion turned west towards LZ Albany. McDade had not taken any steps to protect his flanks, either by detaching small groups of soldiers to thrash through the brush alongside the trail or by walking barrages of artillery. His battalion would pay a heavy price for his negligence.

Brigadier General Man thirsted for revenge for the heavy casualties his force suffered at LZ X-Ray. He ordered two battalions to set up a classic L-shaped ambush that would enable the Communists to rake the column with small arms, automatic weapons, rocket-propelled grenades and mortars. They waited quietly in the elephant grass until the Americans were deep into the trap. Just as the front of McDade's column was entering the clearing at Albany, the North Vietnamese attacked. American airpower arrived eventually to drive off the enemy, but the battalion was destroyed as a fighting force.

The American casualties at LZ X-ray amounted to 79 killed and 121 wounded. The Americans confirmed that they had killed 650 North Vietnamese and estimated that the Communist soldiers took with them approximately 1,000 of their slain comrades when they withdrew from the battlefield.

As for the debacle at LZ Albany, the Americans suffered 151 dead and 121 wounded. They estimated that the North Vietnamese lost 1,500 men as a result of US artillery barrages and airstrikes at Albany.

Although the three-day battle at LZ X-Ray is best described as a tactical draw, the Americans won a strategic victory in the larger Pleiku campaign, as they had prevented the North Vietnamese from splitting South Vietnam in two with a drive to the coast of the South China Sea. Man did his troops a great disservice at Ia Drang by not having large numbers of heavy weapons, particularly large anti-aircraft guns, to offset the American airpower. Many of these were left behind on the Ho Chi Minh Trail as the infantry hurried forward to the battlefield in the highlands.

The Battle of Ia Drang "marked the first wholesale appearance of North Vietnamese regulars in the South," wrote Herr. "And no one who was around then can forget the horror of it or... get over the confidence and sophistication with which entire [North Vietnamese] battalions came to engage America in a war."

## FURTHER READING

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# BUTCHER

WORDS TOM GARNER

## CUMBERLAND

Prince William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland was a privileged military incompetent who presided over several large defeats. His only victory was the controversial Battle of Culloden



*Prince William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland at the height of his fame. Cumberland's noticeable obesity was thanks to a wound he received at the Battle of Dettingen in 1743*

**“CUMBERLAND POSSESSED A SOLDIERLY SWAGGER, AND AN OBSERVER NOTED HIS ‘OPENNESS OF TEMPER AND CARELESS AIR, WHICH IS QUITE À LA MILITAIRE’. THIS OVERCONFIDENCE WOULD COST HIM DEAR IN HIS FIRST MAJOR COMMAND”**



**O**n a bleak moor in northern Scotland two royal cousins met in battle to decide the fate of Britain. Both were fighting for their fathers: Prince Charles Edward Stuart was attempting to reclaim the throne for his exiled father, while Prince William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland was fighting to save the crown of the reigning King George II. There was everything to lose on both sides, and neither man would compromise in what became known as the Battle of Culloden.

Charles is better known to history as the semi-romantic figure 'Bonnie Prince Charlie', but his nemesis at Culloden was infamously nicknamed 'Butcher Cumberland'. This ill-starred Hanoverian became notorious for his relentlessly harsh destruction of the 1745 Jacobite rebellion, but the rest of his military career has been relatively forgotten. What emerges is a ruthless and unpleasant blunderer who presided over a series of large defeats and ruined the reputation of Britain's army in Europe.

**A privileged upbringing**

William's childhood was a startling example of royal privilege. Born at Leicester House, London on 15 April 1721, the prince was the second surviving son of King George II and Queen Caroline of Ansbach. The royal couple despised their eldest son Frederick, Prince of Wales, but their younger son was showered with honours from an early age. William was made a companion knight of the Bath at the age of four, ennobled as the Duke of Cumberland the following year and walked at the head of the knights of the Bath at his parents' coronation. Cumberland was then made a knight of the Garter, and at the age of only ten he received an annual allowance of £6,000.

By the age of 18 Cumberland was devoting much of his time to hunting and chasing actresses, but he also clamoured for a military career. His father gave him a commission as a colonel in the Coldstream Guards in 1740, but Cumberland initially volunteered to serve in

the Royal Navy. His time at sea was short-lived however, and he soon returned to the army. The duke was made a major general at the age of only 21 and saw action within a year at the Battle of Dettingen.

**Wounded by grapeshot**

Dettingen, fought on 27 June 1743, was an allied victory against the French during the War of the Austrian Succession. It was also the last occasion when a reigning British monarch took command on the battlefield. George II had seen military action as a young man at the Battle of Oudenarde in 1708, where he fought bravely under the command of the Duke of Marlborough. 35 years later he led a 42,000-strong army of British, Hanoverian and Austrian troops from the Austrian Netherlands to the village of Dettingen by the Main River in Germany. The king faced a French army of 50,000 led by Adrien Maurice, duc de Noailles. When the French cavalry attacked the British infantry George led a mounted counterattack.

Cumberland was noticeably courageous and was seen "riding about animating the men with great bravery and resolution". He was wounded below the knee by grapeshot, and while his father won the battle the duke was carried from the field. The wound took months to heal and permanently altered Cumberland's gait. He found walking difficult and preferred riding on horseback, which eventually led to obesity. Nevertheless, Cumberland possessed a soldierly swagger, and an observer noted his "openness of temper and careless air, which is

quite à la militaire". This overconfidence would cost him dear in his first major command.

**Fontenoy**

In 1745 George II made Cumberland the commander-in-chief of the British overseas army, and he was given Marlborough's old title of 'captain-general'. However, Cumberland would not enjoy the same success as his illustrious predecessor in the next campaign against the French.

While based in Brussels Cumberland learned that Marshal Maurice de Saxe was besieging Tournai, and Cumberland marched his allied force of British, Hanoverian and Dutch troops to break the siege by forcing the French into a pitched battle at Fontenoy on 11 May 1745. Cumberland believed his 50,000-strong army would outnumber the French, but he was mistaken. The French outnumbered the allies, and Cumberland learned the hard way how to conduct a battle.

The British and Dutch advanced against the French. The duke led from the front, but French musket fire inflicted great casualties on the allied infantry, and Cumberland was forced to retreat. There were approximately 10,000-12,000 allied casualties at Fontenoy, but Cumberland had managed to achieve an orderly retreat, and contemporaries praised him for rallying the troops. Nevertheless, it was a serious defeat, and the victorious Saxe proceeded to capture many towns in Belgium.

The chief lesson that Cumberland learned from Fontenoy was how effective sustained cannon fire and musketry could be on advancing infantry. It was a hard experience that he would soon inflict on others. While Cumberland was reeling from his defeat in Belgium he learned that Prince Charles Edward Stuart had landed in Scotland and begun a rebellion to overthrow the Hanoverian dynasty. Cumberland's hour had come.



*Right: The personal shield of arms of Prince William Augustus as duke of Cumberland, 1727-65*

*Below: The Battle of Fontenoy was one of the largest battles during the War of the Austrian Succession. Cumberland's reputation was not damaged despite his defeat*





### The '45

Charles Edward Stuart was a mortal enemy of Cumberland, and both men owed their positions and circumstances in 1745 to the political fallout of the 'Glorious Revolution' in 1688. Charles was the grandson of the Catholic James II of England and VII of Scotland, who had been overthrown by the Protestant William of Orange from his British thrones. James had set up a court in exile, and his 'Jacobite' followers became committed to restoring the Stuarts to power. The Stuarts actually continued to rule Britain and Ireland through James's Protestant daughters Mary II and Anne I, but when Anne died in 1714 the British parliament chose her

**"EVENTS IN SCOTLAND WENT DISASTROUSLY FOR THE GOVERNMENT. COPE FAILED TO INTERCEPT CHARLES AND THE 'YOUNG PRETENDER' ENTERED EDINBURGH"**

Protestant relative George, Elector of Hanover to succeed to the throne.

George was Cumberland's grandfather and the first Hanoverian king of Great Britain, but his reign was threatened by Jacobite uprisings in Scotland. The northern kingdom became the base for Jacobite operations due its hostility towards the 1707 political union with England and its deep ancestral ties to the Stuart dynasty. James II had died in 1701, but his heir, James Francis Edward Stuart, became the figurehead for the Jacobite rebellions. The most serious Jacobite rising was thwarted in 1715, but James continued to head an exiled court in Rome for decades. His son Charles was an enthusiastic supporter of military action and became determined to place his father on the throne in 1745.

Although Charles had covert French support, he landed in Scotland with only seven followers. Nevertheless, word spread of his arrival, and when Charles raised his standard at Glenfinnan on 19 August 1745 he managed to recruit 1,000 supporters to march on Edinburgh. During this time Cumberland was still commanding 34,000 British troops on the continent, and there were calls to send these soldiers home to deal with the Jacobite threat.

However, Cumberland believed that the 3,850 soldiers in Scotland under the command of Lieutenant General Sir John Cope would "put a stop immediately to this affair". There were also 6,000 troops in England in case the Jacobites decided to march south.

Events in Scotland went disastrously for the government. Cope failed to intercept Charles and the 'Young Pretender' entered Edinburgh on 17 September 1745. Charles then proclaimed his father 'James VIII of Scotland' and declared himself regent. Meanwhile, the Jacobite army had grown to 2,300-2,500 men, and on 21 September Charles defeated Cope at the Battle of Prestonpans. 300 government soldiers were killed and another 1,500 taken prisoner while Cope fled south in defeat and disgrace.

Prestonpans was a shocking defeat and a dismayed Cumberland wrote from the continent, "I hope that Great Britain is not to be conquered by a rabble." The British cabinet ordered Cumberland to send six infantry battalions and nine dragoon squadrons from Belgium. The duke himself requested to return: "It would be the last mortification to me when so much is at stake at home and brought to the decision of arms, to be out of the way of doing my duty."





## Crisis at Derby

Cumberland arrived in England on 19 October to a situation that had further deteriorated. 10,000 government troops commanded by Field Marshal George Wade had been deployed to intercept Charles's army before it marched into England. However, while Wade was in Northumberland the Jacobites slipped through his net by capturing Carlisle and travelling south through Cumbria.

George II now appointed Cumberland as commander-in-chief. Despite his defeat at Fontenoy he was popular with the troops, and his appointment led them to "leap and skip about like wild things that the Duke was to command them". By November Cumberland was based at Lichfield, but the Jacobites were advancing steadily south via Preston and Manchester, and on 4 December Charles arrived in Derby.

For the Hanoverians this was the most serious moment of the rebellion. Derby was only 210 kilometres (130 miles) north of London and Cumberland was forced to move 100 kilometres (62 miles) north of the capital to block the Jacobites' path. However, Charles had overstretched himself. He commanded 5,000 men, but Cumberland's force alone

numbered at least 9,000 as well as a further 10,000 government troops distributed in different parts of England. Although Charles fervently objected, his subordinates decided the best strategy was to return to Scotland to consolidate their strength.

This decision was ultimately a fatal blow to the Jacobites, and from the moment they left Derby their cause was doomed. Cumberland vengefully pursued the Jacobites and told Marshal Wade of his fear that "these villains may escape back and unpunished to our eternal shame." Nevertheless, Wade failed to intercept Charles, and it was left to Cumberland to pursue the Jacobites. He rode north at a fast pace that covered 50 kilometres (30 miles) a day, and by 11 December he was in Macclesfield.

At Macclesfield Cumberland showed the first signs of becoming 'the Butcher'. Jacobite stragglers were imprisoned, but he encouraged the local population to kill any they found: "They have so many of our prisoners in their hands I did not care to put them to death. But I have encouraged the country people to do it as they may fall in their way."

Cumberland's harsh attitude towards the Jacobites increased after Macclesfield, and it



**Above:** Prince Charles Edward Stuart was Cumberland's distant cousin and nemesis during the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745-46. Their fateful encounter at the Battle of Culloden was effectively a royal duel for the British crown

is highly arguable that his mercilessness was rooted in the threat he personally felt from Charles towards his family's rule over Britain. The Hanoverians had only ruled Britain for 31 years compared to the Stuarts who had ruled England for 111 years and 343 years in Scotland. The Hanoverian hold on the crown

Anglo-Swiss artist David Morier painted this famous depiction of the Battle of Culloden. Morier accompanied his patron Cumberland to Scotland, and it is possible that he was an eyewitness to the battle







Cumberland (centre, on white horse) directs the Battle of Culloden. The bloodshed on Drumossie Moor was the last pitched battle to be fought on British soil

was tenuous, and Cumberland probably felt that only he stood between the Jacobites and national ruin. This fear would have bloody consequences in Scotland.

### The Jacobite heartland

To compound Cumberland's problems, he received news near Lancaster that a French invasion to support Charles was imminent, and he was recalled to London. But these orders were soon countermanded, and he continued pursuing the Jacobites, declaring he "would follow them to the furthest part of Scotland".

Between 18-21 December 1745 Cumberland skirmished with stragglers in Cumbria

and oversaw the surrender of their garrison at Carlisle. The Jacobites finally left England, with Charles now focusing on consolidating his position in Scotland. He was initially successful, and the Jacobites won a victory against government troops led by Lieutenant General Henry Hawley at the Battle of Falkirk Muir on 17 January 1746.

Cumberland was soon despatched to take control and arrived in Edinburgh on 30 January. There he held court at the royal family's official Scottish residence at Holyrood Palace. Prince Charles had held court there only three months earlier, and Cumberland's residency was a highly political move to re-establish the Hanoverian dynasty's rule over Scotland. At Holyrood Cumberland addressed his army and stated that he wished them to "crush the insolence of a set of thieves and plunderers who have learned from their fathers to disturb every government they have lived under". He also demanded that his troops "drive them [the Jacobites] off the face of the earth".

Cumberland departed Edinburgh for Stirling while the Jacobites captured

Inverness on 17 February. This was a shock, as Cumberland initially believed it would only be a short campaign. He subsequently headquartered his forces in Aberdeen from 27 February and remained there until 8 April to prepare his army for crossing the River Spey into the Highlands.

While based at Aberdeen Cumberland sent out threatening proclamations to the Jacobites speaking of "military executions" if they would not surrender. He justified his threats in a letter to the duke of Newcastle, stating, "Don't imagine that threatening military execution and many other things are pleasing to me but nothing will go down without in this part of the world."

Cumberland's men were also training to resist the tactics of Charles's troops. The famous 'Highland charge' of the Highlander Jacobites had been largely responsible for the government defeats at Prestonpans and Falkirk Muir, and Cumberland was determined that his troops would now stand firm.

The Highland charge was a simple, swift infantry advance that used shields and broadswords to slam into ranked riflemen. It was an old medieval tactic but was surprisingly effective in 1745 thanks to the determination and fierce courage of the Highlanders in Charles's army. Cumberland's troops practised the tactic of pointing their bayonets to the right



Left: Louis XV of France during the Battle of Lauffeld, 2 July 1747. Marshal de Saxe once again defeated Cumberland, and the battle broke his spell of success after Culloden



## “THE ONCE-PROUD FORCE THAT HAD MARCHED ALL THE WAY TO DERBY WAS NOW MAKING A RELUCTANT LAST STAND THAT ONLY CHARLES APPEARED TO RELISH”

rather than straight ahead at their opponents. The idea was that the angled bayonet thrust would stab the unshielded side of the Jacobite attacker, but the manoeuvre required great nerve. Each government infantryman had to trust his life to the man to the left of him, and time would soon prove whether this unusual tactic would work.

### Culloden: birth of ‘the Butcher’

On 8 April 1746 Cumberland's army finally left Aberdeen and joined forces with the pro-Hanoverian troops of the Earl of Albemarle. The duke then received information that the Jacobites were preparing to fight him from Inverness. However, when the government army was camping near Nairn, the Jacobites attempted to surprise them during Cumberland's 25th birthday celebrations on the night of 15 April. However, Charles's men took so long to cross Drumossie Moor from Culloden House that dawn broke before an attack could be made.

On 16 April Cumberland's army marched onto the boggy ground of Drumossie Moor for the final showdown with Charles's tired and demoralised followers. The opposing sides were unequal: the Jacobites only numbered around 5,000 men and had waited for Cumberland all day without food or shelter. The once-proud force that had marched all the way to Derby was now making a reluctant last stand that only Charles appeared to relish.

In contrast, the government troops numbered at least 9,000 men and had enjoyed a day's rest thanks to Cumberland's birthday. Also, contrary to popular belief, the battle would not be a simple fight between English Hanoverians and Scottish Jacobites. Around three quarters of Charles's army were Highlanders, but there were also 300 English Jacobites and Irish soldiers in French service. More strikingly, Cumberland's force contained four battalions of Scottish soldiers from the Highlands and Lowlands, and several clans fought in regiments commanded by English officers. In essence both Cumberland and Charles were presiding over something close to a Scottish civil war over the matter of who ruled Britain.

Before the fighting started Cumberland urged his troops to stand firm and “parry the enemy in the manner you have been directed”. Moments later a Jacobite cannonball almost killed his aide-de-camp and the battle began. The fight at Culloden lasted less than an hour, but it was bitterly fought. After withstanding a government artillery barrage for half an hour the Jacobites deployed a Highland charge but ran into murderous grapeshot fire. Cumberland was positioned on the right wing, and the Highlanders came within 90 metres (300 feet) of his line before retreating.

The Jacobites who reached the government lines then engaged in fierce hand-to-hand fighting, but Cumberland's new bayonet technique prevailed over the Scottish

## WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION

A DYNASTIC DISPUTE IN AUSTRIA EVENTUALLY CONSUMED ALL OF EUROPE DURING THE 1740s IN A PROTRACTED AND CONFUSING CONFLICT THAT BOLSTERED THE RISING POWER OF PRUSSIA

The War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48) was a series of related wars, two of which directly developed from the death of the Austrian Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI. The accession of Charles's daughter Maria Theresa as Holy Roman Empress was disputed by neighbouring powers over whether a woman should become head of the House of Habsburg, and in 1740 Frederick II of Prussia invaded Habsburg Silesia.

Today this would be a monstrously sexist act, but this was of no concern to the European powers of the 1740s, who promptly started making alliances or declaring war to suit their own political ends. Eventually the war would pit Austria, Britain, the Dutch Republic and Russia against France, Prussia, Spain, Bavaria and Saxony and would even spread to the Americas and the Indian Ocean.

Britain joined the war with Austria largely out of a fear of French domination of Europe. Although there was a victory at Dettingen, Cumberland's defeat at Fontenoy and the Jacobite Rebellion saw a diminished British role in the war. The French occupied the Austrian Netherlands (now Belgium) but it was the Prussians who gained the most from the war.

Frederick II won significant victories at the Battles of Hohenfriedburg and Soor, which enabled the Prussian

occupation of Silesia and secured his reputation as ‘Frederick the Great’. Prussia ensured that Maria Theresa's husband Francis became Holy Roman Emperor. By the terms of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in October 1748 every power was

obliged to restore any captured lands to the original owner, except for the Prussians, who held on to their Silesian conquests. This made the Kingdom of Prussia the only true winner of the war.

*Prussian infantry advance during the Battle of Hohenfriedburg, 4 June 1745. The War of the Austrian Succession cemented the military reputation of Frederick the Great*





## BUTCHER CUMBERLAND

broadsword. Such was the bloodshed that one government soldier recalled, "There was not one bayonet which was not bloodied or bent." On the Jacobite left flank the men of Clan MacDonald faltered in their charge, and they became so frustrated that the clansmen (in Cumberland's words), "threw stones for at least a minute before their total rout began".

It was the rout of the now-defeated Jacobites that sealed Cumberland's bloody reputation. Between 1,500 Jacobites and 240-400 government troops had become casualties, but Cumberland gave orders for no mercy towards wounded or fleeing enemy soldiers. One government soldier, Will Aiken, described how "it was a ghastly sight to see some dead tumbling and wallowing in their blood. Crying for mercy, we followed and slew them for three miles [4.8 kilometres] till the dragoons were quite glutted with gore."

All wounded Jacobites were killed where they lay on the battlefield, and by way of justification the government troops were told to "take notice

**"HE DELIBERATELY RODE INTO INVERNESS WITH HIS SWORD STILL COVERED IN BLOOD"**

*Right: In the aftermath of the Battle of Culloden Cumberland ordered a rigorous search for fugitive Jacobites, and his troops inflicted great harm to the local population around Inverness*

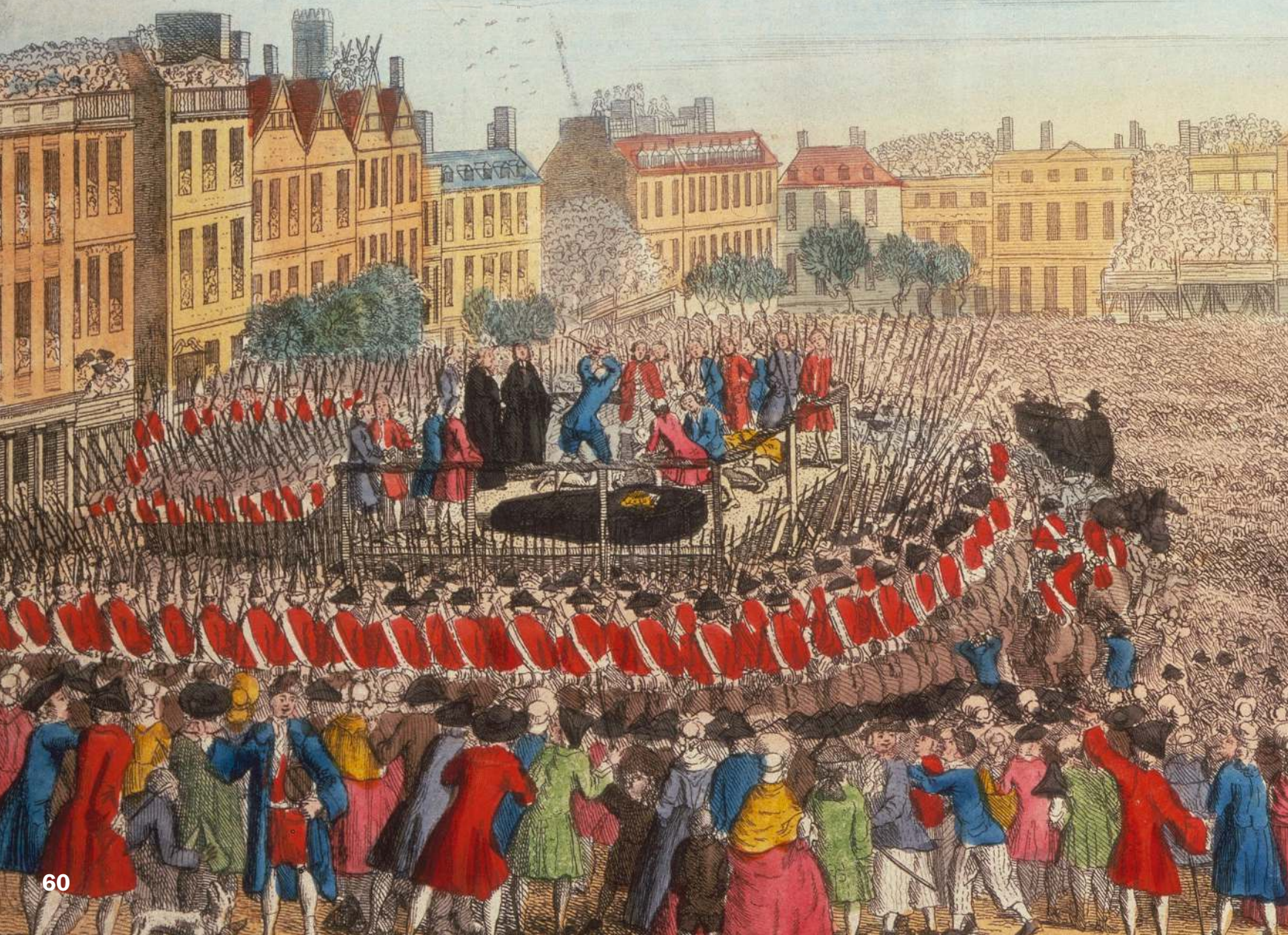
that the public orders of the rebels yesterday was to give us no quarter."

The claim of "no quarter" from the Jacobites could not be accurately verified, but Cumberland used it to completely stamp out the rebellion. He deliberately rode into Inverness with his sword still covered in blood, and subsequent patrols hunted down any Jacobite fugitives. Around 70 Jacobites were possibly killed in this pursuit and around 3,470 rebel soldiers and supporters were taken prisoner. Their fate was not to be envied. Although many prisoners were released, 120 were executed, 88 died in prison, 936 were transported to the colonies and 222 were simply "banished". Cumberland's wrath also extended to his own men and he executed 36 deserters.

The duke remained in Scotland until July 1746 to, in his words, "pursue and hunt out these vermin amongst their lurking holes." The government hunt for Jacobites was a reign of terror, with rebels being summarily shot and many properties destroyed, irrespective of whether their occupants were Jacobites or not. However, Charles himself escaped capture, fled



*Above: After Cumberland's death in 1765 this unsubtle cartoon showed the depths of his unpopularity. His political enemies are dancing on his grave with the devil watching on while a French 'Oriflamme' standard flies above depicting Medusa's head and snakes on the flagpole*





to France and went into permanent exile with his cause in ruins.

Official reaction to the government victory was ecstatic. Parliament issued a vote of thanks, and the composer George Frideric Handel composed *See, the Conquering Hero Comes!* in his honour. The duke was also made a freeman of the London Butcher's Company, but this appointment was ironically taken up by Jacobite sympathisers to dub him 'the Butcher'. The name stuck and was appropriate, given the cruel nature of his Scottish campaign. This infamy would irreparably sour what would be Cumberland's only battlefield victory.

**Martial humiliation**

The remainder of Cumberland's military career was a series of disastrous humiliations. He returned to command British forces in the Netherlands in 1747 but was once again defeated by Marshal de Saxe in a five-hour battle at Lauffeld on 2 July 1747. Cumberland not only ignored advice during the battle but was almost taken prisoner by Irish soldiers in the French army. Cumberland was forced to the negotiating table, and he returned to Britain empty-handed.

Cumberland's harshness increased on his return to Britain, and Horace Walpole remarked on his "very tyrannic behaviour to the army".

**"CUMBERLAND NOT ONLY IGNORED ADVICE DURING THE BATTLE BUT WAS ALMOST TAKEN PRISONER BY IRISH SOLDIERS IN THE FRENCH ARMY"**

The duke imposed draconian laws on the British army, including making any refusal to obey orders a capital offence. This act, along with an ill-fated political career, made the duke of Cumberland very unpopular, but when the Seven Years' War broke out in 1756 he was appointed the commander of the Hanoverian Army of Observation.

Tasked with defending his ancestral homeland of Hanover against French attack, Cumberland commanded around 40,000 British, Hanoverian and Hessian soldiers. However, he was comprehensively defeated at the Battle of Hastenbeck on 26 July 1757. A French army under Louis Charles d'Estrées attacked Cumberland in his centre, drew in his reserves and ultimately inflicted a defeat, although both sides initially thought they had lost the battle.

Cumberland retreated north to Stade and was forced to agree to the Convention of Klosterzeven. Under the convention's terms Hanover was forced to withdraw from the war and its territory was partially occupied by the French. George II repudiated its terms and Cumberland returned to London in disgrace. Upon seeing his son, the king remarked he had "ruined his country and his army, and had hurt, or lost, his own reputation".

With such a public humiliation Cumberland resigned all his military commissions and never commanded an army again. In 1760 he suffered a stroke and died five years later in 1765 aged only 44. Cumberland had never fully recovered from his Dettingen wound and subsequent obesity, and he died unmarried and largely unloved by the public.

Cumberland lived in an outwardly gilded but violent world, and his brutality was by no means exceptional compared with other commanders of the time. However, he does stand out as a general marked out for his incompetence. Cumberland's only notable battlefield victory was at Culloden, and even that was a highly controversial engagement. The rest of his career was ultimately a series of failures on the continent, and he is an arresting reminder that royal lineage and privilege will never guarantee military talent.

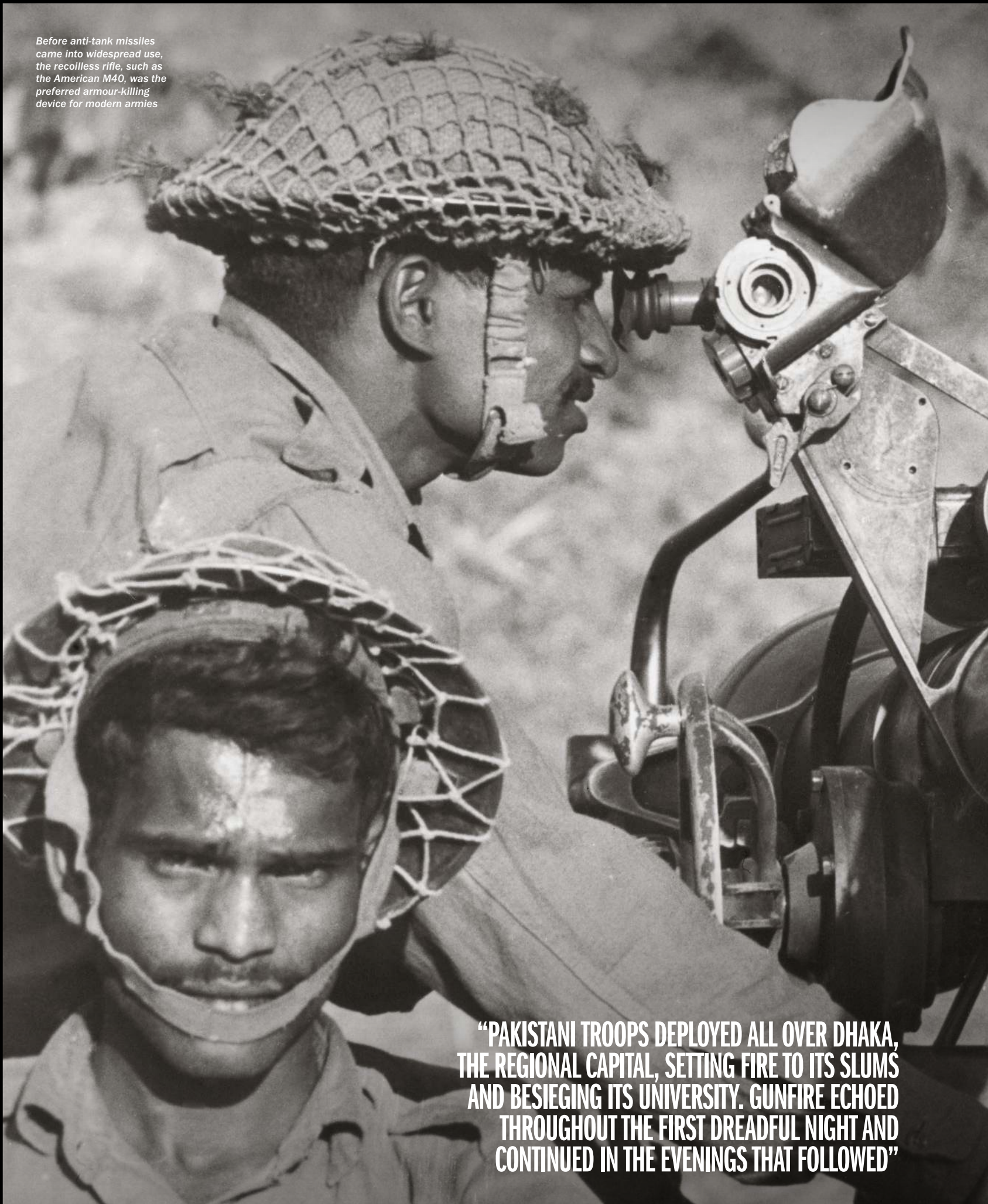
Images: Alamy, Getty



The beheading of Jacobite lords on Tower Hill, London, 1746. Special stands were erected and street vendors are depicted selling snacks and 'last confessions' from the lords



*Before anti-tank missiles came into widespread use, the recoilless rifle, such as the American M40, was the preferred armour-killing device for modern armies*



**“PAKISTANI TROOPS DEPLOYED ALL OVER DHAKA, THE REGIONAL CAPITAL, SETTING FIRE TO ITS SLUMS AND BESIEGING ITS UNIVERSITY. GUNFIRE ECHOED THROUGHOUT THE FIRST DREADFUL NIGHT AND CONTINUED IN THE EVENINGS THAT FOLLOWED”**





# BRUTAL BIRTH OF BANGLADESH

**PART TWO**

WORDS MIGUEL MIRANDA

Fearful of a civil war that could spread into its territory, India prepared a multi-pronged assault on Bangladesh. With the world's nuclear powers watching, failure was not an option

**I**t could have been the greatest exodus in modern history, a displacement unseen since the Partition in 1947. In the summer of 1971 Bengalis from what used to be East Pakistan escaped their towns and villages for India, where they sought shelter in squalid refugee camps. Conditions in these temporary habitats were appalling. Millions of starving, half-naked men and women, together with innumerable children, spent their days in hovels separated by open sewers dug by hand. The flies were a pestilence. Cholera spread quickly, claiming hundreds of lives.

These desperate people were fleeing a brutal persecution that began in March, when Pakistan's dictator Yahya Khan sent Pakistan's army to crush Bengali dissidents. East Pakistan's reigning political party had swept the previous year's elections, and there was both anxiety and outrage over the fact the Awami League's champion, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, would be denied the prime minister's office.

Rather than accept the election results, West Pakistan's rulers – the politicians and generals who had no belief in sharing their mandate – approved Operation Searchlight. On 25 March, Pakistani troops deployed all over Dhaka, the regional capital, setting fire to its slums and besieging its university. Gunfire echoed throughout the first dreadful night and continued in the evenings that followed.

The American diplomat Archer Blood, witnessing the scale of the violence unravelling around him, did his best to gather as much evidence as he could. The following month, on 6 April, he sent his superiors in Washington, DC a telegram that was seething with outrage. The most damning part read, "...But we [the USA] have chosen not to intervene, even morally, on the grounds that the Awami conflict, in which unfortunately the overworked term genocide is applicable, is a purely internal matter of a sovereign state. Private Americans have expressed disgust."





*The Pakistanis might have been dug in for a fight, but they didn't anticipate the rapidity of India's blitz over the countryside*



## “THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION AT THE TIME CONSIDERED PAKISTAN A VITAL COLD WAR ALLY, AND THE CHAOS IN ITS EASTERN HALF WAS CONSIDERED NONE OF AMERICA’S BUSINESS”

However, what became known as the ‘Blood Telegram’ accomplished little. The Nixon administration at the time considered Pakistan a vital Cold War ally, and the chaos in its eastern half was considered none of America’s business, or responsibility.

For several months the same problem bedevilled India, whose eastern provinces bore the brunt of the humanitarian crisis. Now ensconced in Calcutta, members of the Awami League had already tried to launch a guerrilla war to save the country they had called Bangladesh. The effort failed and soon the weather turned foul as seasonal rains drenched South Asia.

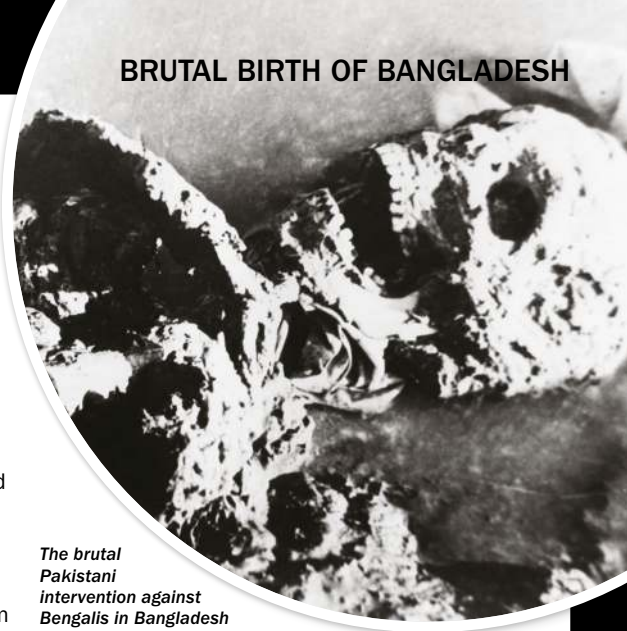
India’s leader, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, had conferred with her cabinet to discuss a quick solution to the Bangladeshi question. The Awami League’s cadres-in-exile had failed to sustain a guerrilla war in their homeland, and New Delhi didn’t believe in promising too much support for the freedom fighters. India had its own problems – Kashmir and the volatile border with Pakistan, the Maoist Naxal guerrillas in its southern jungles and the Chinese in their outposts in Arunachal Pradesh.

Perhaps, the prime minister suggested, a quick and decisive intervention was in order. India did possess a competent military with enough strength to hammer the Pakistanis. A sudden assault on the new country of Bangladesh, whose terrain was flat and offered few difficulties for mechanised columns, made an attack a viable option.

### Prudence wins

But the prime minister’s intentions were far from reasonable according to Chief of Staff General Sam Manekshaw, a decorated World War II veteran who had the distinction of being India’s highest-ranking Parsi – a Zoroastrian Persian born and raised in the subcontinent.

‘Sam Bahadur’, as he was called with fondness, pointed out that once the monsoon began that year from June until October Bangladesh’s rivers would overflow and become impassable. The flat, dry paddies would be submerged and even bridges might be inaccessible. In addition, nearly 200 Indian tanks were out of commission. Most of all, Sam Bahadur concluded, he needed time. The troops weren’t in position and supplies weren’t ready.



*The brutal Pakistani intervention against Bengalis in Bangladesh caused thousands of deaths*

Prime Minister Gandhi deferred to her most capable general and bided her time. Besides, if she did launch an intervention, so could the Chinese. Worse, the Americans, whose carrier strike groups in the Pacific could reach the Bay of Bengal unopposed, could also become embroiled in the conflict.

India’s support for the Mukti Bahini guerrillas didn’t increase until September, when trainers from the Special Frontier Force – an elite group that once received support from the American CIA – established rudimentary camps in the states adjacent to Bangladesh, such as West



*The Soviet-made PT-76 was indispensable during the race towards Dhaka. Designed for crossing rivers and canals with ease, it allowed India’s infantry to manoeuvre around fortified enemy positions*



Bengal, Assam and Tripura. There was no shortage of manpower, as up to 20,000 young men were processed each month in a huge build up.

Another talented Indian strategist was tasked with ironing out the plans for attacking Bangladesh. This was Lieutenant General J.F.R. Jacob, whose Jewish faith made him India's

perfect emissary to Israel in the years after the war. In 1971, however, Lieutenant General Jacob had to conceive an operation that would earn Manekshaw's approval and strike at the enemy's 'centre of gravity'.

India's preparations were far from simple. The area of operations, encompassing Bangladesh's entire territory, was divided into four sectors, three of which had a corps assigned to it. In the north, near the narrow Siliguri Corridor near Bhutan, was XXXIII Corps with two elite units, the 20th Mountain Division and the 71st Mountain Brigade. XXXIII Corps was supposed to work in conjunction with the 95th Mountain Brigade in the central sector. The western sector had II Corps and was heavy on armour and infantry. The eastern sector was the staging ground for IV Corps and had the advantage of naval aviation providing cover.

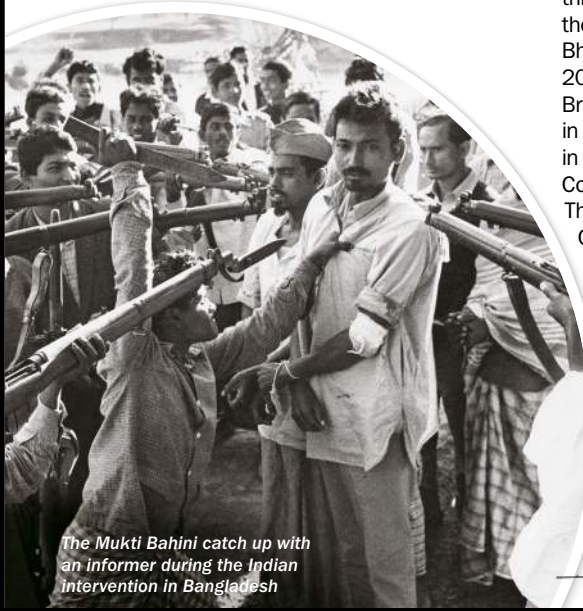
In October Mukti Bahini units resumed their infiltration of Bangladesh to conduct hit-and-run attacks on Pakistani outposts and infrastructure. No decisive battles were fought in the next two months, but the raids forced the Pakistanis to spread their soldiers over towns and villages, leaving roads and railways unprotected.

**The first deadly blow**

On 23 November a sizable Pakistani force backed by American-made M24 Chaffee tanks tried to attack the Mukti Bahini in West Bengal. The objective was a command and supply base in the town of Boyra that straddled the border. The brazen operation miscalculated the response from India, which was swift and terrible. Indian troops fought alongside the guerrillas, and a combination of air strikes and artillery knocked out a dozen enemy tanks. These losses were a worrying setback for the Pakistanis, who may not have lacked for manpower but did have a shortage of artillery and fighting vehicles.

The tit-for-tat skirmishes escalated the following week, and in December entire battalions of Mukti Bahini launched assaults on railways and other vital infrastructure in their homeland. Pakistan retaliated with a wave of air strikes using its F-86 Sabres, targeting Indian bases and airports believed to be supplying the guerrillas. The trap was sprung. Feigning outrage over these airborne provocations and confident the diplomatic efforts in the months prior would stave off any condemnation from Washington and Beijing, Prime Minister Gandhi let her generals settle the Bangladesh question.

On 4 December more than 100,000 troops struck from four directions. In the north, XXXIII Corps followed the path of the Brahmaputra



The Mukti Bahini catch up with an informer during the Indian intervention in Bangladesh



# AIR SUPERIORITY IN 48 HOURS

PAKISTAN HAD FORTIFIED ITS EASTERN HALF WITH A RING OF AIRBASES. TO ACHIEVE VICTORY, INDIA NEEDED TO ELIMINATE THEM ALL

A crucial advantage for India during the 1971 war was its impressive collection of ground and carrier-based fighter jets. While Pakistan did enjoy a short-lived heyday during the late 1950s thanks to arms deliveries from the US, by the 1960s this had dissipated as India poured money and resources into its air force.

Strong ties with the Soviet Union allowed the transfer of the MiG-21 to

the subcontinent. These Eastern Bloc interceptors, known by their NATO nomenclature as the 'Fishbed', were the best in Asia at the time and worked alongside British-made Hunter fighter-bombers – the other prized assets of the IAF.

On the eve of the 1971 invasion, Pakistani squadrons from Bangladesh attempted to cripple Indian airbases across the border with dumb bombs. Poor coordination and a lack of ordnance made this an exercise in futility. Worse, India's war planners knew these enemy aircraft were based in a dozen locations – all of them in range for retaliatory air strikes.

Before the sun had set on 4 December, most of these sites were out of commission. The MiG-21 in particular was an agile and lethal adversary when matched against the American-

made F-86 Sabre, considered Pakistan's best equaliser in the sky.

The following day the Indian Navy's carrier INS Vikrant launched its Sea Hawks on the southeastern coasts of Bangladesh. The targets were the air and naval facilities in Chittagong and Cox's Bazaar.

Without any shore-based defences to oppose them, the INS Vikrant and its escorts remained unmolested in the Bay of Bengal.

By 5 December most Indian air sorties were used for close air support as Pakistani Sabres were no longer able to contest their

airspace. There would be no more major dogfights for the duration of the war.

As Indian mechanised columns neared Dhaka, closing on the city like a vice, Indian MiG-21s had a last crucial mission before the city's defenders capitulated. This was the pinpoint destruction of the Government House on 14 December. Two days later Indian troops entered the city victorious.

The liberation of Bangladesh was the first modern conflict where Indian pilots and aircraft established total superiority in a conventional war.

**“THE MIG-21 IN PARTICULAR WAS AN AGILE AND LETHAL ADVERSARY WHEN MATCHED AGAINST THE AMERICAN-MADE F-86 SABRE”**

The Soviet-designed Indian Air Force Mig-21s helped India dominate the skies over Bangladesh







*Soviet T-55 medium tanks proved their worth in Bangladesh, where they out-matched obsolete Pakistani armour*

River and moved south at a rapid pace. In the west and east, II Corps and IV Corps avoided concentrations of dug-in Pakistani troops and raced towards their objectives. The Indian Air Force had done an impressive job neutralising Pakistani airfields, nearly all of which were along the border.

The most crucial engagement in the opening days of the war – the third time India and Pakistan had come to blows since both gaining independence from Britain – was the flawless blockade of Bangladesh's long and fractured coast. None of the belligerents possessed formidable navies, but India risked its new aircraft carrier, the INS Vikrant, on a hazardous mission to attack Pakistani forces from the air in the eastern sector.

The Pakistanis didn't have anything larger than gunboats to protect the coast, but there was the PNS Ghazi, a submarine that could stalk and eliminate the Vikrant and its escorts one by one. Luckily for the Indian flotilla, the Ghazi wasn't stationed in Chittagong at the outbreak

## “MUKTI BAHINI UNITS RESUMED THEIR INFILTRATION OF BANGLADESH TO CONDUCT HIT-AND-RUN ATTACKS ON PAKISTANI OUTPOSTS AND INFRASTRUCTURE”

of the war and was still on its way from Karachi, Pakistan's gleaming coastal metropolis.

In the days before hostilities began, Indian cryptanalysts had intercepted Pakistan's sensitive communications network in Bangladesh. It was discovered that the Ghazi had to trace India's long coastline before it could attempt an ambush on the Vikrant. Should it fail this mission, its next objective was to plant mines along India's eastern coast.

But the Indian Navy was fully aware of the Ghazi's presence in their waters and sent an aging destroyer, the INS Rajput, to eliminate it. The Rajput calculated the Ghazi's likely position and went to intercept the submarine. In the early hours of 4 December Rajput dropped

several depth charges and later reported that it had successfully destroyed the Ghazi. While the Ghazi was indeed destroyed on 4 December, the cause of its destruction is contentious.

Indian divers who searched for wreckage in the shallows of Visakapatnam eventually found the Ghazi torn apart by a massive internal explosion. Pakistan claimed the submarine was destroyed in a mine-laying accident.

### Flawless operational art

Meanwhile in Bangladesh, the war was progressing well for India. Pakistani fighter jets were either neutralised or stranded in their airfields within two days of the invasion. This allowed Indian columns to move unmolested



across the countryside. Like the Arab-Israeli wars before it, this conflict in South Asia served as a proving ground for Soviet and Western technology. This time, the Soviet-made kit showed its mettle. Striking from the western sector, II Corps managed to secure its objectives, the towns of Jhenaidah and Jessore, in less than a week.

This was made possible by the Soviet-designed PT-76, an amphibious tank that used an elongated hull equipped with propellers to traverse water. India had imported hundreds of these tracked vehicles, and even if its armour was too thin for comfort, its 76mm main gun could take on anything thrown at it.

Unfortunately for Pakistan, their best anti-tank weapons in the Bangladesh theatre were jeeps mounted with a recoilless rifle. The PT-76s became indispensable for crossing streams, canals and rivers, often with an infantry squad riding on top. This spared engineers the gruelling task of floating pontoons or repairing bridges under fire.

India's rapid progress meant the Mukti Bahini were reduced to spectators in this final showdown. This was intentional, as India's generals knew having irregular troops in their order of battle would compromise their remarkable operational tempo.

## "INDIA'S RAPID PROGRESS MEANT THE MUKTI BAHINI WERE REDUCED TO SPECTATORS IN THIS FINAL SHOWDOWN"

While Indian casualties were quite serious in a few engagements, the biggest hurdles in the war were the local roads. In many places these were little more than dirt tracks, and the Indian army didn't have enough transports, such as APCs or helicopters, for rapid movement. If India's army had stocked up on hundreds of Soviet Mi-2 helicopters, for example, it would have made even better progress.

The air assault proved decisive in the war. One of its most daring operations was the insertion of the Para Battalion Group, a crack unit, deep behind enemy lines. The objective was in the northern sector, in a town called Tangail. On the eighth day of hostilities, 500 paratroopers were ferried by plane and dropped over their objective, which was captured without a fight.

As insignificant as the operation appeared, Tangail marked the beginning of the end for Pakistan's desperate stranglehold on Bangladesh. The town northwest of Dhaka had a highway leading straight to the capital. With IV Corps already occupying the banks of the Meghna River and II Corps reaching the Padma

River, Tangail's fall completed the encirclement of Bangladesh's largest city and seat of power.

India's high command could then have sent the Mukti Bahini, whose numbers reached almost 100,000 men, to liberate Dhaka on their own, street by street, with the Pakistanis fighting to the death. But common sense prevailed, and surgical air strikes were launched on the city. On 14 December, after MiG-21s and Hunters had bombed and rocketed Government House, East Pakistan's highest ranking civilian, Governor Abdul Motaleb Malik, emerged from a nearby bunker. Trembling and almost speechless with shock, he found a scrap of paper to scrawl his resignation on. At the end of that undignified moment, Dhaka was ripe for the taking.

### IN PART III...

The clash between India and Pakistan draws to an end, leaving an even more bitter rivalry in its wake. History of War issue 50 is on sale 28 December 2017.

Images: Getty, Shutterstock



India's assault on Bangladesh had to wait until the year's end because of the monsoon. Once it had passed, additional months were spent readying troops for the invasion



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## Heroes of the Medal of Honor

# OLIVER OTIS HOWARD

In the summer of 1862 this Union general led two New York regiments in a gallant charge at Fair Oaks that cost him his right arm

WORDS FRANK JASTRZEMBSKI

**A**s the German soldiers from the 11th Corps rushed piecemeal away from the Confederate onslaught, Major General Oliver O. Howard did what he thought best to curb the hysteria of his fleeing men. Thousands were routed when a strong column of Confederate soldiers under the legendary leadership of General Thomas J. 'Stonewall' Jackson smashed into his corps' exposed flank and collapsed the Union line. Howard received plenty of criticism (and still does to this day) for his men's flight during the Battle of Chancellorsville in May 1863, but no one ever questioned Howard's bravery on that day.

Mortified at his men's cowardly behaviour, Howard grabbed the nearest Union standard and slid the pole between the pinned-up sleeve of his frock coat where his right arm used to be, having lost it in battle one year before. He shouted words of encouragement and gallantly rode among the blue tide, exhibiting his trademark steadiness and valour.

Throughout his career as an officer during the American Civil War, Oliver O. Howard acted as if he cared little for his life when the bullets began to fly. This carelessness could easily be attributed to "rashness or fatalism," as one observer noted, but this attitude actually sprang from Howard's religious beliefs. Some mocked the polished, virtuous and intellectual officer, judging him to be a better fit for the seminary or a classroom rather than leading soldiers into battle. But Howard found religion to be his greatest strength, allowing him to face the dangers, horrors and carnage of battle in a collected and plucky manner.

Oliver Otis Howard was born into a farming family on 8 November 1830 in Leeds, Maine. His father Rowland died while he was only ten, leaving his mother with the task of supporting

his brothers. To help relieve this burden, Howard moved in with his uncle, the Honourable John Otis of Hallowell. He decided at a young age that he didn't want to spend his days tilling fields, so he prepared for college between periods of working on a farm. He enrolled at Bowdoin College at the age of 15, graduating in 1850 after four years. He received an appointment to the United States Military Academy that same year, graduating fourth in the class of 1854.

Howard was appointed a brevet second lieutenant in the ordnance department of the United States Army upon graduation. He bounced between different arsenals in New York and Maine before being dispatched to Fort Myers, Florida, in 1856 to serve as Colonel William Harney's chief ordnance officer. Soon after he returned to the United States Military Academy and served as the assistant professor of mathematics. Howard began to seriously contemplate entering the ministry, but the outbreak of the American Civil War halted these ambitions.

Howard resigned his army commission to accept a position from the governor of Maine as colonel of the Third Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment in May 1861. He commanded a brigade at the Battle of Bull Run, where the Union army was shamefully driven from the field in its first major battle. During the reorganisation of the Army of the Potomac, Major General George B. McClellan retained Howard as a brigade commander after he was promoted to the rank of brigadier general in September 1861.

General McClellan transported and landed the Army of the Potomac (numbering around 100,000 men) in Virginia outside the Confederate capital of Richmond in the spring of 1862. He hoped his offensive would catch General Joseph E. Johnston's outnumbered army off-guard and lead to the capture of the

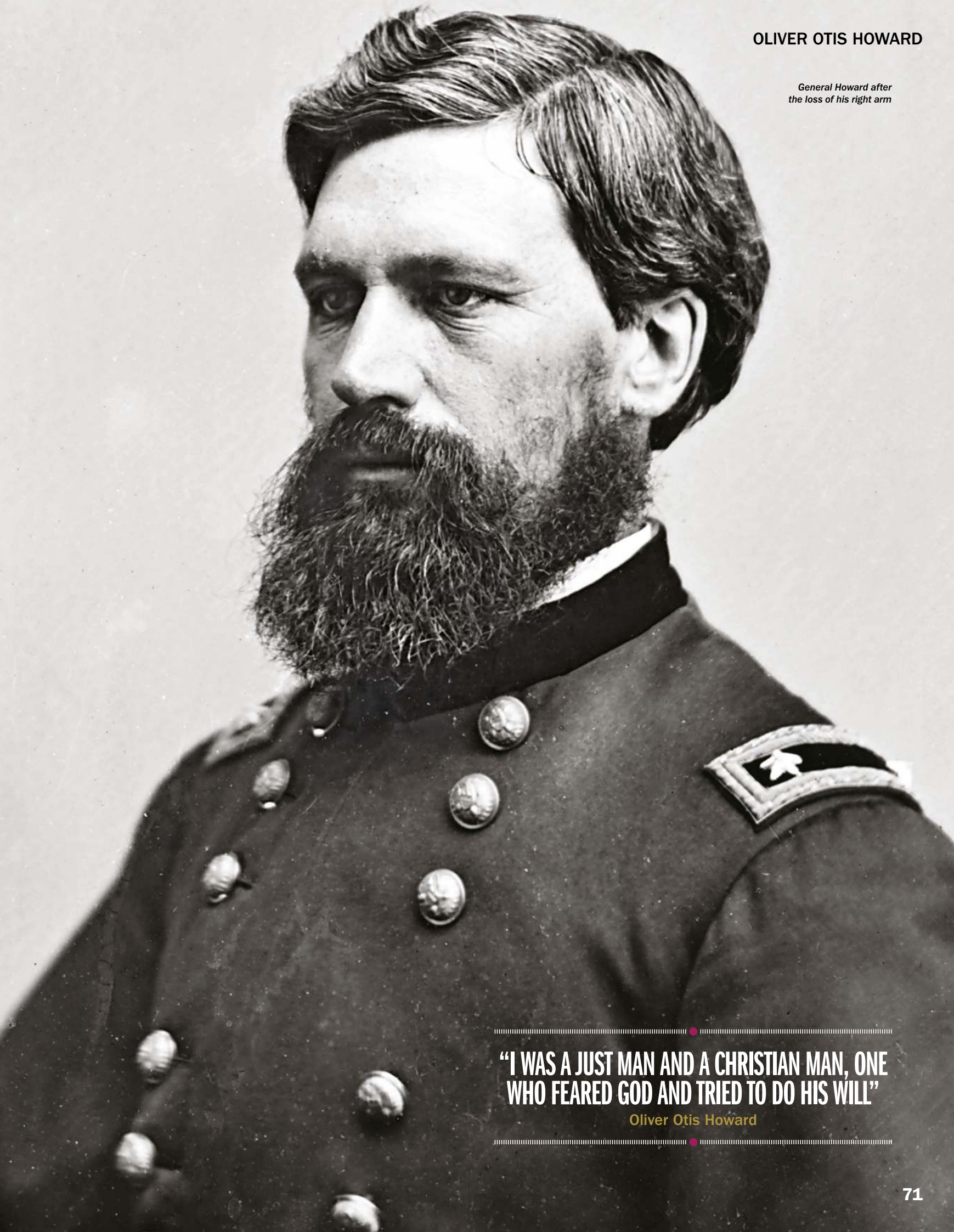
Confederate capital. Two divisions of the Union IV Corps were carelessly thrown across the Chickahominy River and divided from the rest of the Union army as McClellan crept towards his objective. Johnston took the initiative and attacked the isolated divisions near Fair Oaks Station on 31 May 1862. The defenders were pushed back, but they stabilised their position and waited for reinforcements.

The next day the Confederates renewed their assault, and Howard's brigade of four regiments – the 61st New York, 64th New York, Fifth New Hampshire and 81st Pennsylvania – formed part of the fresh reinforcements that arrived. Two of Howard's regiments were detached from his command. Howard personally led the two remaining regiments (the 61st and 64th New York Regiments of around 800 men) forward through the woods and underbrush to support the hard-pressed Fifth Pennsylvania to his front. The New Yorkers rushed past the Pennsylvanians and slammed into the Confederate line. Howard's New Yorkers managed to drive the Confederates back to the ground they had captured the previous day.

The conspicuous Yankee general made an easy target for Confederate infantrymen. Early on Howard, one of the few mounted men, tumbled into the dirt, his horse shot dead from under him. The general called for a second animal. Soon after a ball from a Mississippi rifle tore into the flesh of Howard's right forearm. His brother Lieutenant Charles Howard, serving on his staff, bound up the wound with a handkerchief to stop the flow of blood.

Howard pressed on with his men, wishing to lead by example. "Howard led his men with the greatest gallantry close up to the enemy," Colonel Edward E. Cross of the Fifth New Hampshire recalled, who was himself twice wounded during the fight. Cross commended





OLIVER OTIS HOWARD

*General Howard after  
the loss of his right arm*

..... ● .....

**"I WAS A JUST MAN AND A CHRISTIAN MAN, ONE  
WHO FEARED GOD AND TRIED TO DO HIS WILL"**

Oliver Otis Howard

..... ● .....



**“IN GENERAL HOWARD THROUGHOUT I FOUND A POLISHED AND CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN EXHIBITING THE HIGHEST AND MOST CHIVALROUS TRAITS OF THE SOLDIER”**

**General Sherman**



*General Kearny reassured Howard that the ladies wouldn't think less of him for losing a limb*

Howard for being the only general to lead his men into battle. He wrote that Howard “nobly acted with a bravery bordering on rashness and nobly sustained his reputation as a brave and efficient officer”. Upon reaching the deserted Union camp from the previous day’s fighting and nearing the enemy, the left foreleg of Howard’s horse was broken by a ball.

Howard was hit again in the right arm, the bullet lodging into his elbow and shattering the bone. A lieutenant rushed over and helped Howard dismount but was killed in the act. With his limb dangling at his side and growing faint, Howard relinquished command to his subordinate officer. Three of Howard’s

regiment commanders and 713 men were casualties from the 2,000 men who engaged.

As he staggered to the rear Howard bumped into a fellow brigade commander’s medical surgeon, the New Jersey native Gabriel Grant. The surgeon was operating on wounded officers and soldiers he had personally pulled from the frontline next to a large tree stump (he won the MOH for this deed). Recognising Howard, he called the general over and wrapped a compress around his mangled arm.

A sympathetic soldier whose fingers were broken and bleeding helped Howard along to the Union hospital located at Courtney House. There, Howard encountered an old





A contemporary illustration of the Battle of Fair Oaks

Dr. Palmer told him he would have to wait another six hours before the amputation could be performed to allow for the reaction to set in.

Howard waited in agony to have his arm sawn off. When the time came, Palmer and four soldiers solemnly walked into the cabin with a stretcher. They lifted Howard onto its canvas frame and ferried him back to the hospital's amputation room, a place Howard described as a gruesome den with "arms, legs and hands not yet all carried off, and poor fellows with anxious eyes waiting their turn".

Palmer pulled a tourniquet tightly around Howard's shoulder above the wound. Dr Grant joined the operating crew. They strapped the general to the table and administered a mixture of chloroform and gas, knocking him out cold. Howard was one of the lucky ones. When he woke he found a nub where his right arm had been. He later mentioned that the limb was discarded somewhere "in Virginia soil".

Howard and his brother, wounded in the leg during the battle, departed on leave the next day with certificates of disability. The general rode beside the driver of an ambulance wagon filled with a cargo of wounded officers. The wagon was halted by General Philip Kearny, a Union division commander, who dismounted to greet the party. Kearny had a reputation for being one of the most fearless soldiers in the army, losing his left arm in the US-Mexican War and fighting alongside the French in North Africa and Italy.

Kearny shook hands with Howard and in an attempt to console him blurted out, "General, I am sorry for you, but you must not mind it; the ladies will not think the less of you!" Howard laughed and stated optimistically that, "There is one thing that we can do, general, we can buy our gloves together!"

Howard's time back in Maine to recuperate was far from relaxing. He spent two months on the road lecturing the citizens in the principal cities and villages in the state to help fill the quota of volunteers badly depleted by the losses sustained in Virginia. Even though he was "pale, emaciated, and with one sleeve tenantless" one acquaintance admired how Howard stood up before his audiences, "the embodiment of all that is good and true and noble in manhood". Howard never intended for the loss of an arm to keep him out of the war.

He returned to the frontline and fought in 22 battles before the close of the American Civil War. Following the Chancellorsville debacle, many called for Howard's removal from command. But President Abraham Lincoln vouched for him and calmed the uproar by asserting, "He is a good man. Let him alone; in time he will bring things straight."

Howard did bring things straight as Lincoln promised and became one of General William T. Sherman's most trusted officers. "In General Howard throughout I found a polished and Christian gentleman," Sherman wrote, "exhibiting the highest and most chivalrous traits of the soldier."

Howard was presented with the Medal of Honor in March 1893 for heroically leading his New Yorkers in the successful charge at Fair Oaks that led to the loss of his right arm. He retired from the United States Army after 44 years of service in 1894 at the mandatory age of 64.

acquaintance, Dr Hammond. Hammond grabbed hold of Howard's tender arm and could tell it was broken. Hoping to provide Howard with something more comfortable than a wooden floor, Hammond led him to a small cabin occupied by an old slave couple. Howard lay down on a bed in the cabin and awaited a formal medical examination.

His brigade surgeon Dr Palmer and several others arrived to assess Howard's wound as he rested on the bed caked with blood, sweat and gunpowder. "At last Dr Palmer, with serious face, kindly told me that my arm had better come off," Howard later recalled. To the surgeon's grim news Howard replied, "All right, go ahead."

..... ● .....

**"[HE] ACTED WITH A BRAVERY BORDERING ON RASHNESS AND NOBLY SUSTAINED HIS REPUTATION AS A BRAVE AND EFFICIENT OFFICER"**

Medal of Honor citation

..... ● .....



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WORDS TOM GARNER

# JADOTVILLE DAY

## 2017



Members of the Irish UN Veterans Pipe Band lead the ceremonial parade

The ceremony was not just attended by the surviving 'Jadotville Tigers' but also large numbers of ex-Irish Army UN veterans

Surviving Irish UN veterans of the 1961 siege were finally honoured in Athlone, on 21 October 2017, with the unveiling of a plaque marking the first annual commemoration of their heroic defence



**B**etween 13-17 September 1961, 2,000-4,000 Katangese armed gendarmeries and experienced European mercenaries attacked an isolated United Nations military unit of 156 Irish UN troops at Jadotville in the destabilised Republic of the Congo. Led by Commandant Pat Quinlan, the men of A Company, 35th Infantry Battalion had been sent to protect the citizens of the prosperous mining town but soon became trapped into fighting an intense defence.

The siege raged for days but the inexperienced Irish troops inflicted over 1,000 casualties on their attackers while suffering no fatalities themselves and only five wounded men. However, A Company received inadequate support from the UN high command and were eventually forced into a tense captivity after they ran out of ammunition.

The UN and Irish Army authorities deliberately hushed up this remarkable

defence and the Jadotville veterans were given no official recognition for their bravery for decades. However, thanks to the determined campaigning of veteran John Gorman the men of A Company are now recognised as valiant heroes and in recent years they have been presented with various honours including a presidential unit citation and a commemorative monument as well as various books, documentaries and a feature film.

Nevertheless, 2017 will be the 'Jadotville Tigers' biggest year yet as the veterans of the Irish Defence Forces have now adopted the day of their release from captivity on 25 October 1961 as 'Jadotville Day.' This day will now be commemorated annually and on Saturday 21 October 2017 the first 'Jadotville Day' ceremony took place in Civic Square, Athlone, County Westmeath.

The event centred on the unveiling of a commemorative plaque to honour A Company's heroism. The mayor of Athlone,

Aengus O'Rourke unveiled the plaque before Jadotville veteran Jimmy Feery DSM (Distinguished Service Medal) laid a wreath. With other surviving Jadotville veterans in attendance, the ceremony also included a parade by Irish Defence Forces veterans, speeches, salutes, a minute's silence and the sounding of the 'Last Post' before concluding with three cheers for A Company.

The next Jadotville Day will be held in Dublin in 2018 but before then the veterans will finally be presented with a special medal from the Irish government called 'An Bonn Jadotville' (The Jadotville Medal). This award will be presented by the Irish Minister of Defence at Custume Barracks, Athlone on 2 December 2017 to the 156 members of A Company, 35th Battalion, which will include living veterans and the families of deceased personnel. The medal is long overdue but will be a fitting tribute to A Company's courageous actions in 1961.



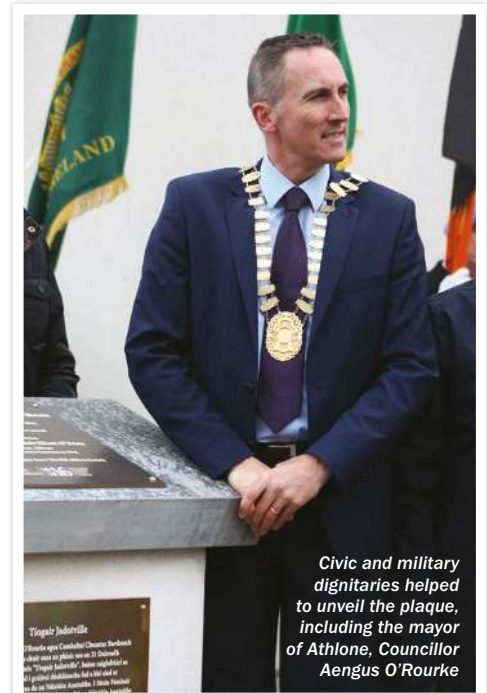
A Company, 35th Battalion was officially represented by the Irish tricolour and the flags of the United Nations and the Irish Army



Veterans from the Siege of Jadotville, including Tony Dykes (third from left) and Noel Carey (fourth from right) gather around the recently unveiled plaque in their honour



History of War's three Jadotville interviewees Noel Carey (left), John Gorman (centre) and Tony Dykes (right) pictured with Issue 47 of the magazine



Civic and military dignitaries helped to unveil the plaque, including the mayor of Athlone, Councillor Aengus O'Rourke



# REFLECTIONS FROM THE 'JADOTVILLE TIGERS'

AT THE CEREMONY FOR THE FIRST JADOTVILLE DAY, SURVIVING VETERANS GAVE THEIR THOUGHTS ON THE NEW ANNUAL COMMEMORATION, THEIR UPCOMING MEDAL AND MEMORIES OF THEIR COMRADES PAST AND PRESENT



**JOHN GORMAN**  
1961 RANK: PRIVATE

"Jadotville Day made me feel brilliant and sad at the same time, because I've been campaigning for a long time, and I was just so happy for the few veterans that are left and the families. They've waited 56 years for this.

"We were branded as cowards, which we weren't, and it's just a marvellous time now for me. Nobody ever, ever gave us a chance of this ever happening but determination is a great thing. For me, the medal on 2 December is the icing on the cake."

**"WE WERE BRANDED AS COWARDS, WHICH WE WEREN'T"**



**NOEL CAREY**  
1961 RANK: LIEUTENANT

"Today is a chance to reflect on the events of 56 years ago and to remember those comrades who have passed on. They would certainly have been overjoyed to see the ceremony and recognition of their bravery and heroism.

"At long last we have been promised that the veterans of A Company and the deceased members will be finally recognised and awarded 'An Bonn Jadotville' (The Jadotville Medal). This will finally put an end to all the disappointments but equally will restore the honour of a very gallant company commander and A Company veterans. To say that I am pleased would be an understatement: I am absolutely delighted."

*Below: Jadotville veteran Jimmy Feery DSM laid a wreath for all members of A Company, 35th Battalion in front of the newly unveiled plaque*

**Right:** Paul Clarke (far right), Director of Ceremonial, Second Infantry Battalion Association and the main organiser of Jadotville Day



**Middle:** Large crowds of UN veterans and spectators gathered for the ceremony in Civic Square, Athlone for the ceremony



**TONY DYKES**  
1961 RANK: PRIVATE

"It's one of the most fantastic days we've had, although most of the guys I knew in 1961 are gone. 56 years is a long time, but to see the turnout here today was unbelievable, including most of the families of the men who are gone. At least they are not forgotten.

"I really don't know about the [Jadotville] medal. Lots of people say we should have got a better award such as the DSM (Distinguished Service Medal), but it's a new, historic medal for the Irish Army and on that point we are pleased to get it.

"We've also got to thank one man: John Gorman. He's the man who persevered. He wasn't an officer, he was just a private soldier, but for 50 years he dug deep and didn't give in no matter what the top military people in Dublin said. He prodded them all the time and carried on regardless. You've got to take your hat off to him."



**JIMMY FEERY**  
1961 RANK: PRIVATE

"I was delighted to be nominated to lay the wreath for UN veterans and the lads from Jadotville. My son is very proud and they said I did a good job.

"The medal is long overdue but better late than never. Unfortunately a lot of people would like to be there for the medal but they're not, and that's the situation. I was the only one that got a DSM but I'm not sure whether this new Jadotville Medal will take precedence. I'll wear the two of them side by side because every man in Jadotville should have received a DSM."

**"THE MEDAL IS LONG OVERDUE BUT BETTER LATE THAN NEVER"**





**TOM GUNN**  
1961 RANK: PRIVATE

"Jadotville was the same as the Alamo and Rorke's Drift in some ways. However, they all died at the Alamo and they lost some men at Rorke's Drift, whereas we didn't lose anybody.

"Today is the culmination of a hard-fought battle over the years. Having to grovel for medals isn't a soldier's lot, and we met nothing but obstacles from the people in charge. To be labelled a coward, especially being Irish (they don't call us the 'Fighting Irish' for nothing), it was terrible to have that stigma.

"Apparently the medal has everything on it, including Cú Chulainn, who is an Irish mythical warrior. It will be a rare medal because there are only 156 of them, so it's fine for us who have survived, but the next of kin can be proud of it too."



**DOMINICK HARKINS**  
1961 RANK: PRIVATE

"The way we felt about the siege was that we weren't going to get out. We got no help from the rest of the UN, and I think we were sent in just to be killed.

"But today they have done a great job. The man who stands out the most is John Gorman: we would have got nothing were it not for him. We're getting a medal on 2 December and there'll never be another one like it. I feel very proud of it, but they [the Irish government] weren't going to give it to us at all were it not for the pressure put on them."

*Below: Irish UN veterans pose in period costume from the Congo Crisis*



**"THIS WILL FINALLY PUT AN END TO ALL THE DISAPPOINTMENTS BUT EQUALLY WILL RESTORE THE HONOUR OF A VERY GALLANT COMPANY COMMANDER AND A COMPANY VETERAN"**





**PADDY HOGAN**  
1961 RANK: PRIVATE

"We're very happy at long last. The Irish government took 56 years to get this far, and were it not for John Gorman and the UN veterans it would still be swept under the carpet. I think it was a good thing that it got out in the open.

"I would love it to be known all over the world that there was never a white flag put up by the Irish soldiers in Jadotville. We were tricked into a surrender in the end and we had no choice. There was no food and ammunition left, and the force they had was far superior to ours.

"It's my belief that Quinlan should have got a very special type of award or medal, even for his family today. He was a kind man, well spoken and easy to get on with, but when it came to the push in Jadotville he knew what to do and he did it. My comrades and myself owe our lives today to Quinlan and the decisions he made."



**NOEL STANLEY**  
1961 RANK: PRIVATE

"I get very emotional. When I saw the [Siege of Jadotville] movie in Galway for the first time I cried.

"It makes me feel good that things are coming to an end, but I'm very sad for the people who are gone. It's 56 years too late: not too late for us who are still here, but there are only 40-45 of us left out of 156. Six in the last year have gone so it's very poignant."

*Below: Jadotville veterans wearing UN blue berets gather in Civic Square, Athlone before the ceremony, including Noel Carey (far left), Tom Gunn (second from left), Dominick Harkins (third from left, foreground) and Tony Dykes (far right)*



**"THERE WAS NEVER A WHITE FLAG PUT UP BY THE IRISH SOLDIERS IN JADOTVILLE. WE WERE TRICKED INTO A SURRENDER IN THE END AND WE HAD NO CHOICE"**

*Below: Flanked by Irish Army veterans bearing ceremonial flags, the plaque commemorates not only the Siege of Jadotville but also members of the Athlone Municipal District who participated in the Easter Rising of 1916*

*Image: Trisha McLoughlin*

**IRISH UNITED NATIONS VETERANS ASSOCIATION**



The IUNVA is the association for serving and ex-service members of the Irish Defence Forces and Gardaí (Republic of Ireland Police Force). It is open to anyone from these organisations that have served at least 90 days service on a UN mission in a foreign country. The IUNVA's primary role is to provide support and events for members and their families who have been affected by overseas service. For more information visit: [www.iunva.ie](http://www.iunva.ie)





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# EPAMINONDAS

## SPARTA'S NEMESIS

Epaminondas of Thebes is one of the greatest and most revolutionary commanders in military history, destroying the might of Sparta in a single day

WORDS MURRAY DAHM

**A**t the Battle of Leuctra in 371 BCE, Epaminondas led the outnumbered Theban phalanx to an overwhelming victory against an army of Spartan hoplites. Theban victory that day forever changed the political map of Greece. In order to achieve this, Epaminondas had created a military revolution that would indelibly change warfare. His tactics and strategies are studied and implemented to this day, yet the man himself remains a figure of some mystery and controversy.

### Prelude

In the aftermath of the victory in the Peloponnesian War against Athens (431-404 BCE), Sparta sought to impose its will on all of Greece. This included several states in the plains of Boeotia – an area over which the city of Thebes considered itself the natural leader. Despite having supported Sparta against Athens, Thebes switched its support to Athens and led an anti-Spartan coalition of cities that was able to gain some success against Sparta in the Corinthian War (395-387 BCE).

With the peace of 387 BCE, known as 'The King's Peace' because it was underwritten by the Persian King Artaxerxes II, all Greek states were to remain autonomous city-states. The Persians also backed the authority of Sparta and established them as the dominant force in Greece.

Buoyed by this foreign support, Sparta proceeded to attack the supposedly autonomous city-states of Greece under the pretext that they threatened the peace. In 383

BCE a coup in Thebes led to the establishment of a pro-Spartan oligarchy and the installation of a garrison. Four years later an anti-Spartan coup led by Pelopidas overthrew this regime and re-established the city as the dominant force in Boeotia. Thebes then consolidated power in the region by creating the Boeotian League, a coalition of cities with Thebes at its head. Thebes became the champion of a free Greece against the tyranny of Sparta.

Sparta moved to put an end to this resistance. Despite negotiations in 371 BCE peace could not be reached, and King Cleombrotus marched at the head of a Spartan-Peloponnesian army to crush Thebes.

### A hero emerges

Epaminondas's role in Thebes's return to freedom and ascendancy is difficult to pinpoint. This is partially down to a problem with available sources. The life of Epaminondas as written by Plutarch does not survive and several other writers (especially Xenophon, whose history the *Hellenica* is vital for the period) show a distinctly anti-Theban bias. Several aspects of Epaminondas's life are tied up with academic debates that remain unsettled.

Yet we do know that Epaminondas was vitally important to Theban politics, warfare and history in the period 371-362 BCE, and a vast array of fragmentary and anecdotal accounts reinforce this importance. We also have traces of him in other sources that do survive, such as Plutarch's *Life of Pelopidas* and *Life of Agesilaus* and in Cornelius Nepos's *Book of Great Generals of Foreign Nations*.

Epaminondas was one of the liberators who overthrew of the pro-Spartan government at Thebes, although he is not named by Xenophon – who equally does not name Pelopidas, despite being the ringleader of the uprising. This highlights the problem of Xenophon, who is an otherwise reliable source for the period. His version of Theban history, however, can be seriously questioned, and his accounts of Epaminondas, Pelopidas and the defeat of Sparta are unreliable. Xenophon was pro-Spartan in all his writings, which seems to have seriously affected his judgement when it came to Theban history.

Epaminondas was the leader of the Theban peace delegation at Sparta in 371 BCE and then in the Leuctra campaign, and it is clear he was already respected as a leader and speaker. We are told that he was the best speaker in Thebes and, using widespread sources, we are able to piece together a picture.

His father Polymnis was from an honourable Theban family although one of little wealth. Nonetheless, Epaminondas was educated as well as any other Theban. We know that he never took advantage of his more wealthy friends, such as Pelopidas, and refused their offers of financial help. He was also impervious to attempted bribes made by various cities and individuals. He learned to play the lyre, to sing and dance and studied athletics and wrestling. All of these, we are told, he saw could have a military application. Cornelius Nepos in *Epaminondas* tells us that he thought agility would be useful in warfare rather than just physical strength. There are later anecdotes





## THE MILITARY PHILOSOPHER

The figure of Epaminondas is shrouded in mystery despite his importance and a rich anecdotal tradition regarding his outlook on life. His death heralded the end of Theban dominance and very little evidence of his life survives. Alexander the Great would raze Thebes to the ground 30 years later, which probably destroyed yet more evidence. Several important literary sources also do not survive, which hampers us yet further, and no description is available. We do

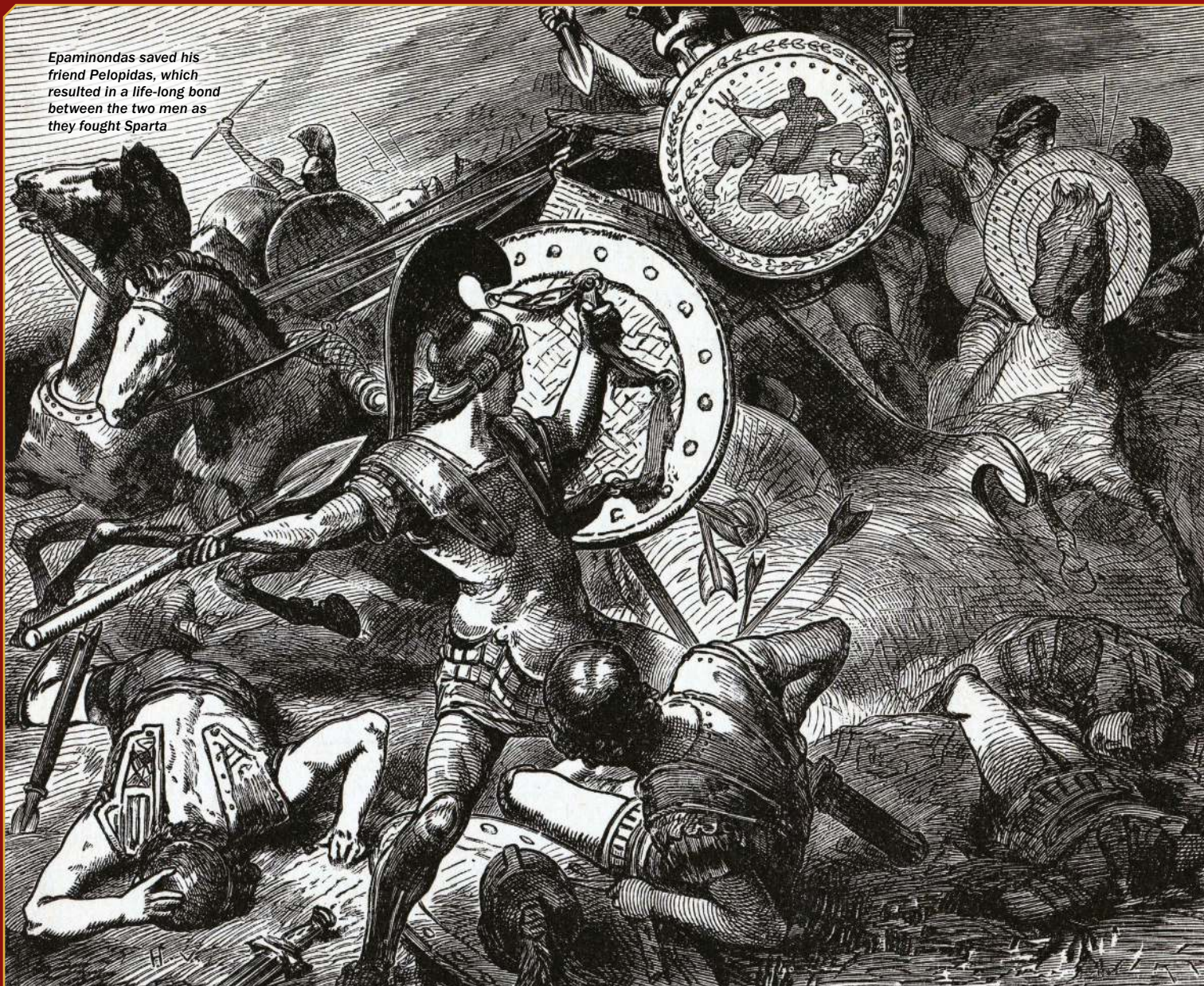
know, however, that Epaminondas was impoverished, despite being from an old aristocratic family. He embraced his straitened circumstances and made them a part of his philosophy. Indeed he was regarded as a military philosopher who studied the lyre, singing and dance – all skills in which he saw a military application. He remained unmarried so that he could better concentrate on studying those things that brought protection and glory to Thebes.

**“EPAMINONDAS WAS IMPOVERISHED, DESPITE BEING FROM AN OLD ARISTOCRATIC FAMILY. HE EMBRACED HIS STRAITENED CIRCUMSTANCES AND MADE THEM A PART OF HIS PHILOSOPHY”**





Epaminondas saved his friend Pelopidas, which resulted in a life-long bond between the two men as they fought Sparta



from Polyaeus of him encouraging the Theban hoplites to train in wrestling. Nepos lists his qualities: prudent, serious, a lover of the truth, self-controlled, kindly. His listed qualities are so many that we must suspect the tradition that survives in Nepos is panegyric or an encomium. Epaminondas also studied philosophy and is rated by several authors as a military philosopher with only one rival – Socrates.

Perhaps the earliest event for which we have an account of Epaminondas is him saving the life of his colleague and friend Pelopidas at Mantinea in 385 BCE. This parallels Socrates saving Alcibiades's life at the battle of Potidaea. Plutarch tells us that Epaminondas defended his friend's body even though he thought Pelopidas was already dead.

This bonded the two together for life. Pelopidas was not only prominent in the overthrowing of Spartan power but was also the first commander of the elite Theban hoplite force, the *Heiros Lochos* or Sacred Band. This force comprised of 300 Theban hoplites paid by the state to dedicate themselves to war, just as their Spartan adversaries were. They were probably established in the aftermath of the liberation. One tradition names Epaminondas as the founder of this unit, although another

**“EPAMINONDAS ALSO STUDIED PHILOSOPHY AND IS RATED BY SEVERAL AUTHORS AS A MILITARY PHILOSOPHER WITH ONLY ONE RIVAL – SOCRATES”**

names Gorgidas, one of the other conspirators against Spartan power. We should be wary that Epaminondas's later importance may mean that he was given credit for all manner of events to which his connection may have been small.

The Sacred Band is itself obscured by conflicting sources, since several writers name it as comprising 150 pairs of homosexual lovers who would fight furiously for each other. Other writers do not mention this recruitment requirement, and Xenophon refuses to name the unit altogether. Nonetheless, the Sacred Band was prominent in several of Thebes's most important battles – including Tegrya in 375 BCE, Leuctra in 371 BCE and Mantinea in 362 BCE. They died to the last man facing the forces of Philip II of Macedon at Chaeronea in 338 BCE.

**Leuctra**

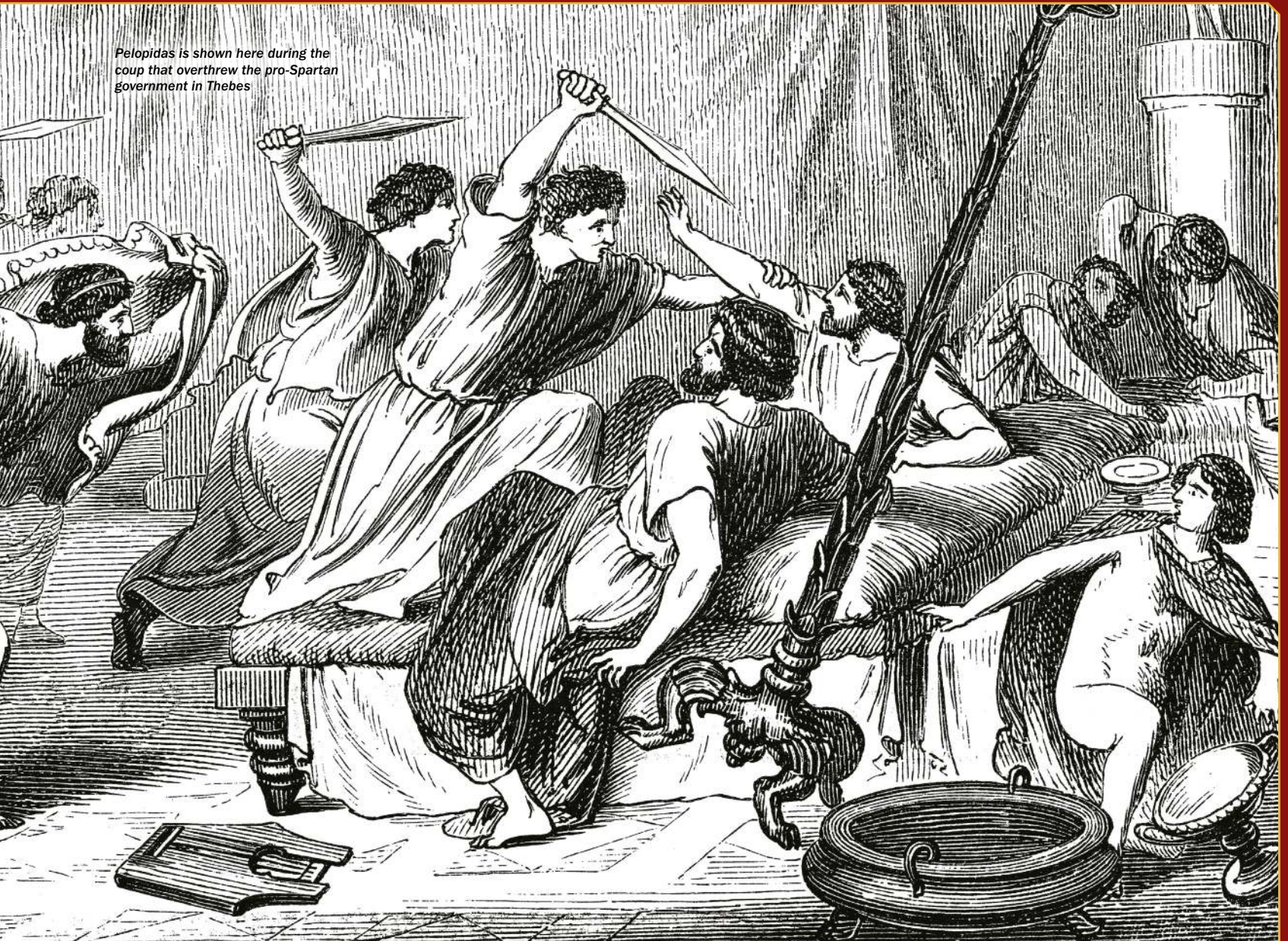
The Battle of Leuctra is one of the most discussed in the ancient sources. There are four lengthy accounts of the battle – more than for any other important ancient battle – by Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, Xenophon and Pausanias. Unfortunately, among these four accounts there is confusion and disagreement, and working out what actually happened – and why the sources disagree – is complicated. There is also a plethora of minor and anecdotal accounts, which can add to the overall picture of the battle.

The differences in the accounts are such that they cannot be reconciled without disregarding one or another of them. Xenophon paints a reasonable picture of the battle but gives no credit to the Thebans or Epaminondas, and he contradicts the picture from our other sources. Disregarding Xenophon, all the other surviving sources preserve a cohesive picture of the battle and Epaminondas's role in it.

Epaminondas had been elected Boeotarch for the campaign – these were the elected leaders of the Boeotian League. There were 11 Boeotarchs: four came from Thebes itself and the others from the other cities in the league. Pausanias's and Diodorus's accounts



Pelopidas is shown here during the coup that overthrew the pro-Spartan government in Thebes



make it clear that Epaminondas was regarded as the senior Theban leader and overall commander, and the tradition that attached itself to Epaminondas, which credits him with responsibility for the victory, should be trusted. What is more, it is clear that Epaminondas's plan of battle was deliberate and premeditated, not some accident of happenstance. His reputation as a military genius should never be in doubt.

On the field at Leuctra, Epaminondas drew up the Boeotian line with the Thebans themselves on the left facing the Spartan King Cleombrotus who was, as was traditional, stationed on the Spartan right. Numbers at the battle differ in all the accounts, but the consensus has come to 7,000 Boeotian hoplites (because seven Boeotarchs were present) and 700 cavalry, versus 10,000 Peloponnesians (including 700 Spartans) and 1,000 cavalry. Plutarch has 2,000 Spartans present (two-thirds of the total

Spartan manpower available at the time). Other sources give a ratio of six to one in favour of Sparta to increase the impressive nature of the Theban victory.

The 300 members of the Theban Sacred Band with their commander (*lochagos*) Pelopidas were also stationed on the left, possibly as a front line, although their exact deployment has evaded scholars. Pelopidas led the charge and won great glory in the battle, even though he was not a Boeotarch. The remainder of the Boeotian line was drawn up obliquely or in echelon, meaning they were facing diagonally away from the massed Theban phalanx on the left. As the Theban left advanced towards Cleombrotus, therefore, the remainder of the Boeotian line would not be required to fully engage with the corresponding part of the enemy phalanx. Diodorus tells us they actually withdrew as the Spartan army advanced. The battle would be decided by the

densely packed Theban phalanx's clash with the Spartan right; elite versus elite.

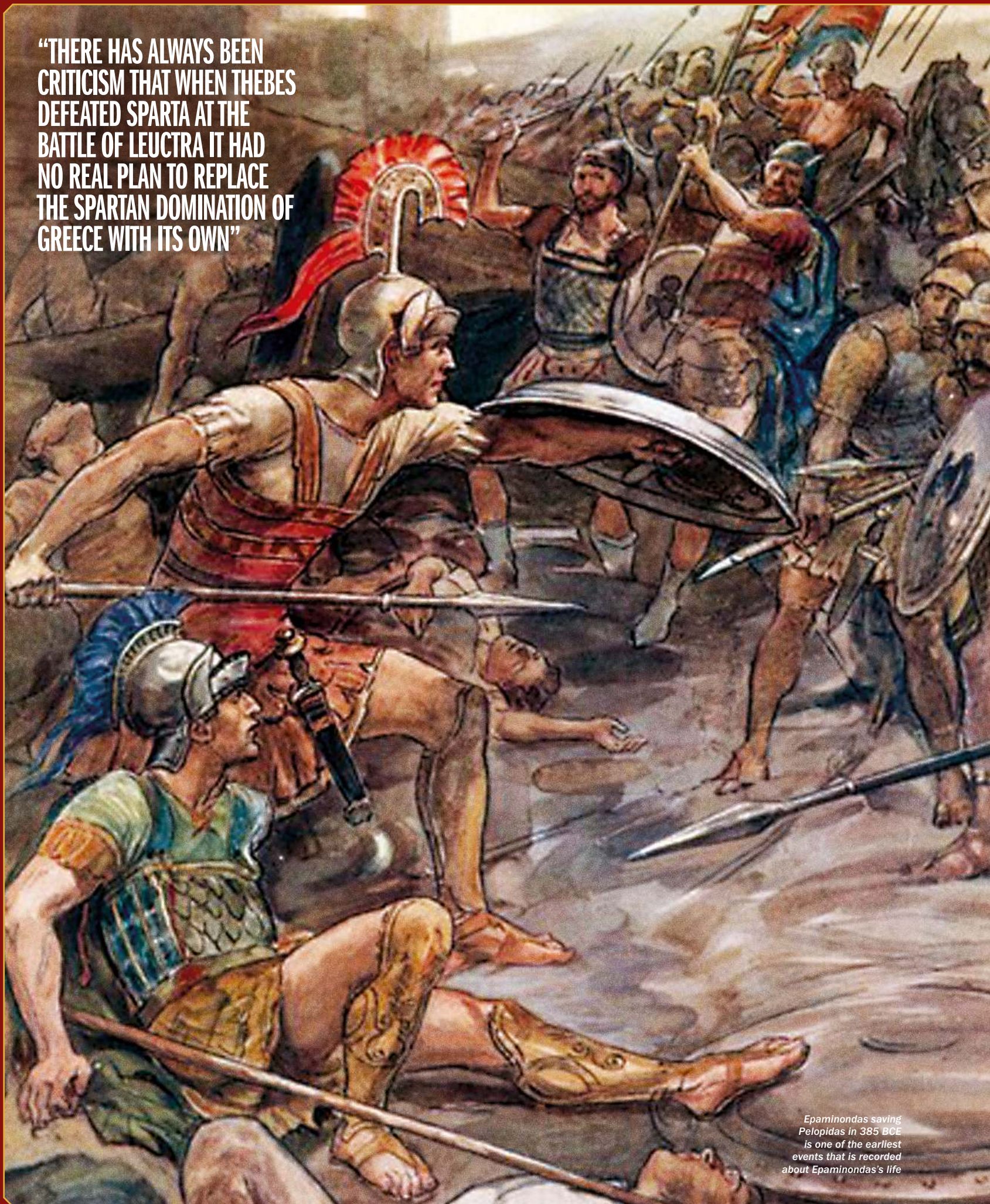
This is indeed what happened. The Theban phalanx, led by the Sacred Band, smashed into the Spartan right and, after a time, felled Cleombrotus and much of his Spartiate bodyguard. After this the Peloponnesian line broke and fled from the field. Plutarch and Xenophon tell us that 1,000 Spartans fell in the battle – a huge blow to Spartan manpower and one from which they could not recover: Spartan boys trained in warfare from childhood, and losing that many men in a single engagement crippled the city as a military force. Other accounts have larger numbers – as high as 4,000 Peloponnesian dead. Losses on the Theban side range from 47 to 300.

Summaries of the battle suggest that such an event and its significance had never before been seen. While it is true that Sparta had been defeated in battle before, it had never lost such a significant proportion of her manpower in one battle. What is more, the Spartans had broken and fled, something that had never been recorded before and showed that the Spartans were just as fallible as ordinary men. The damage to the Spartan reputation was perhaps more harmful than that to its manpower.

**“IT IS CLEAR THAT EPAMINONDAS’S PLAN OF BATTLE WAS DELIBERATE AND PREMEDITATED, NOT SOME ACCIDENT OF HAPPENSTANCE. HIS REPUTATION AS A MILITARY GENIUS SHOULD NEVER BE IN DOUBT”**



**“THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN CRITICISM THAT WHEN THEBES DEFEATED SPARTA AT THE BATTLE OF LEUCTRA IT HAD NO REAL PLAN TO REPLACE THE SPARTAN DOMINATION OF GREECE WITH ITS OWN”**



*Epaminondas saving Pelopidas in 385 BCE is one of the earliest events that is recorded about Epaminondas's life*



Sparta was not destroyed, however, and still represented a tyrannical presence (according to 'freedom-loving' Thebans) in Greece. Epaminondas's next actions showed how far-reaching his plan was: he aimed to bring about the complete overthrow of Spartan power.

### The Theban hegemony

There has always been criticism that when Thebes defeated Sparta at the Battle of Leuctra it had no real plan to replace the Spartan domination of Greece with its own. Hence the Theban hegemony of Greece was short-lived and lasted barely a decade. One consideration is that Thebes only sought to end Spartan domination, not replace it. By achieving that it actually created a power vacuum, which would eventually be filled by Macedon under Philip II.

But Thebes, and more importantly Epaminondas himself, did have a plan to utterly destroy Spartan domination of Greek politics, which can be seen in his next actions. In 370 BCE Epaminondas led an invasion of the Peloponnese itself, taking advantage of grievances against the Spartans in the Peloponnese. The states of Elis and Arcadia in particular chafed at Spartan dominance and they formed a league opposing Sparta in 370. They were soon joined by Argos.

Envoys came to Thebes and both Epaminondas and Pelopidas (both Boeotarchs for 370) persuaded the Theban government to support an alliance. The members ringed Sparta and could force Sparta to defend its homeland rather than venture further afield in Greece and therefore ensure the autonomous identity of other Greek city-states.

Epaminondas was the figure to whom the alliance looked as their leader, even though there was no official position for him to be considered as such. He and Pelopidas were keen to invade the Peloponnese itself, and so late in the year they sent 6,000 troops to oppose a punitive Spartan expedition against Arcadia. When they arrived, the Spartans had already departed Arcadia, and the opportunity to invade the Spartan homeland of Laconia presented itself.

Winter campaigns were a rarity in Greek warfare and an invasion of Sparta's homeland was even rarer. The other Theban commanders, however, realised that their commands were due to expire at the end of the year and were in favour of returning home. Only Pelopidas and Epaminondas wanted to remain. Epaminondas persuaded the others to follow him and invaded Laconia via a four-pronged attack, advancing along all four access routes, as they could not all be defended adequately.

As the armies descended towards Sparta, they came across the Eurotas River, swollen by winter rains. This proved an obstacle, but Epaminondas's army burnt and destroyed as it went along the eastern bank, inflicting pain and suffering that the Spartans were more used to dealing out than experiencing themselves.

The failure of Sparta to muster an army against Epaminondas demonstrates the catastrophic manpower shortage it was suffering. The Spartans were forced to enrol their slave class, the Helots, as hoplites. 6,000 Helots joined up and Sparta soon realised it

## "EPAMINONDAS WAS THE FIGURE TO WHOM THE ALLIANCE LOOKED AS THEIR LEADER EVEN THOUGH THERE WAS NO OFFICIAL POSITION FOR HIM TO BE CONSIDERED AS SUCH"

had armed its own slaves, who could easily turn against them.

Eventually Epaminondas was able to cross the Eurotas, and he did so unopposed. He marched his army into the outskirts of Sparta itself, but the Spartan policy pursued by King Agesilaus II was not to meet him in open battle. Such a tactic was entirely un-Spartan and attests to the fear Epaminondas instilled.

Instead, Agesilaus kept his forces in garrisons and defending passes that were difficult to attack. Such a tactic left Epaminondas unable to take advantage of his huge army, which numbered 40,000. Unable to come to battle, Epaminondas decided to ravage all of Laconia and to free Messenia, the Helot homeland held under Spartan domination since the 8th century BCE. Most of the towns of Laconia were unwallled, as defence had never been necessary, and Epaminondas burned them as he went, taking ample plunder with him. Helots and other disaffected Peloponnesians flocked to his side.

### A new Messenia

In 369 BCE Epaminondas founded a new city of Messenia on the slopes of Mount Ithome to take advantage of those who opposed Spartan domination and had found not only a voice for the first time but also support – not just from Thebes but from Elis, Arcadia and Argos too. This city would be a permanent thorn in Sparta's side, deplete her manpower even further and close the ring of states opposed to Sparta. There can be little doubt that Epaminondas conceived the policy, foundation and even the location of Messenia. He sent invitations far and wide for any exiles to come to the city as a new home. It would become the focal point of resistance to Sparta. Epaminondas made sure the town was built and, when spring came in 369 BCE and the men of Elis, Argos and Arcadia departed for home, he left a garrison before departing himself for Thebes. There he was prosecuted for breaching the legality of his year-long office and continuing it into a new year. The jury dismissed the charge.

Sparta was forced to look for help from its old enemy, Athens, which sent men under Iphicrates, but when he learned of Epaminondas's approach he withdrew. Epaminondas's campaign had been

*Right: The Spartans were considered a near-unbeatable force, but their defeat at Leuctra destroyed their reputation and ended their domination over Greece*

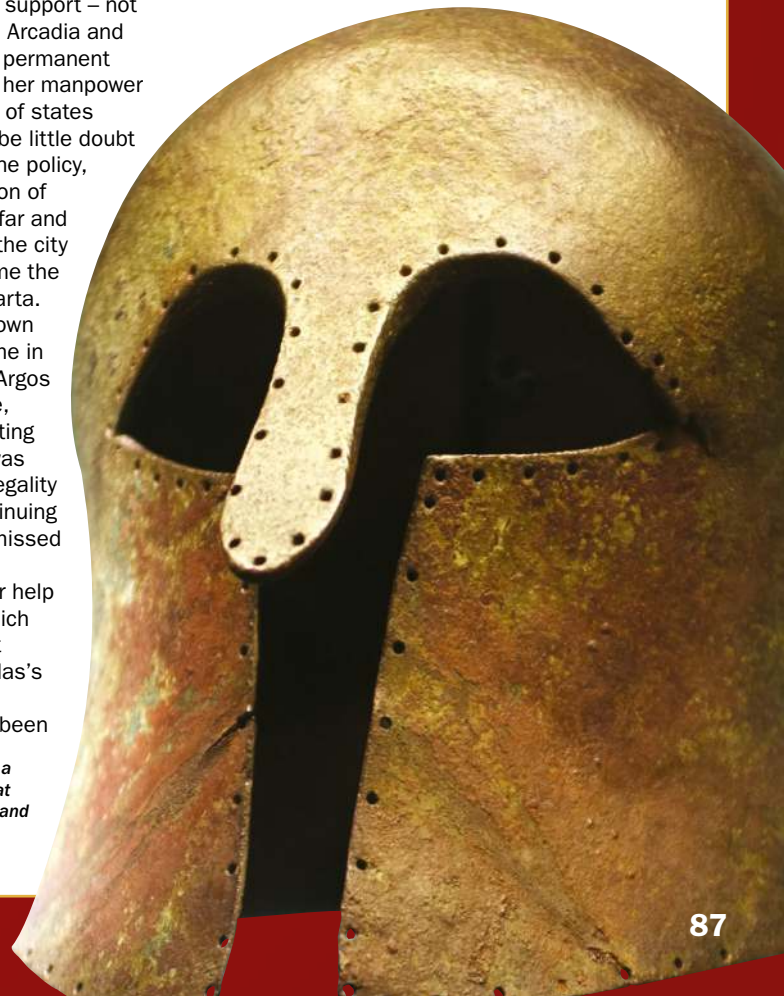
a huge success, achieving things never before done or even attempted. The establishment of Messenia all but doomed Sparta to a slow death. Still, he had not met and destroyed the Spartans in open battle once and for all.

Sparta looked to cement its alliance with Athens who, probably fearful of the growth of Theban power, gladly assented. The Peloponnesians appealed to Thebes to invade again and Epaminondas obliged. Pelopidas did not go with him, turning towards the Thessalians in the north instead. The Spartans sent their army to Corinth, who remained a Spartan ally (as did Athens) to oppose the Theban invasion.

Epaminondas, at the head of his forces, was again unable to draw the Spartan alliance out to face him in open battle – they stayed behind hastily constructed defences that barred Epaminondas's path into the Peloponnese. He attacked the Spartan camp at the changing of the watch and forced the defenders to retreat.

Rather than attack the outnumbered defenders, Epaminondas next chose to conclude a truce with the Spartan commander, allowing him to withdraw and give the Thebans free passage. This action actually enabled those enemies of Epaminondas's power at Thebes later to accuse him of treason for not inflicting casualties on the Spartans when he had the chance. This charge perhaps shows an overall Theban policy to harm Sparta rather than replace it as the pre-eminent Greek power.

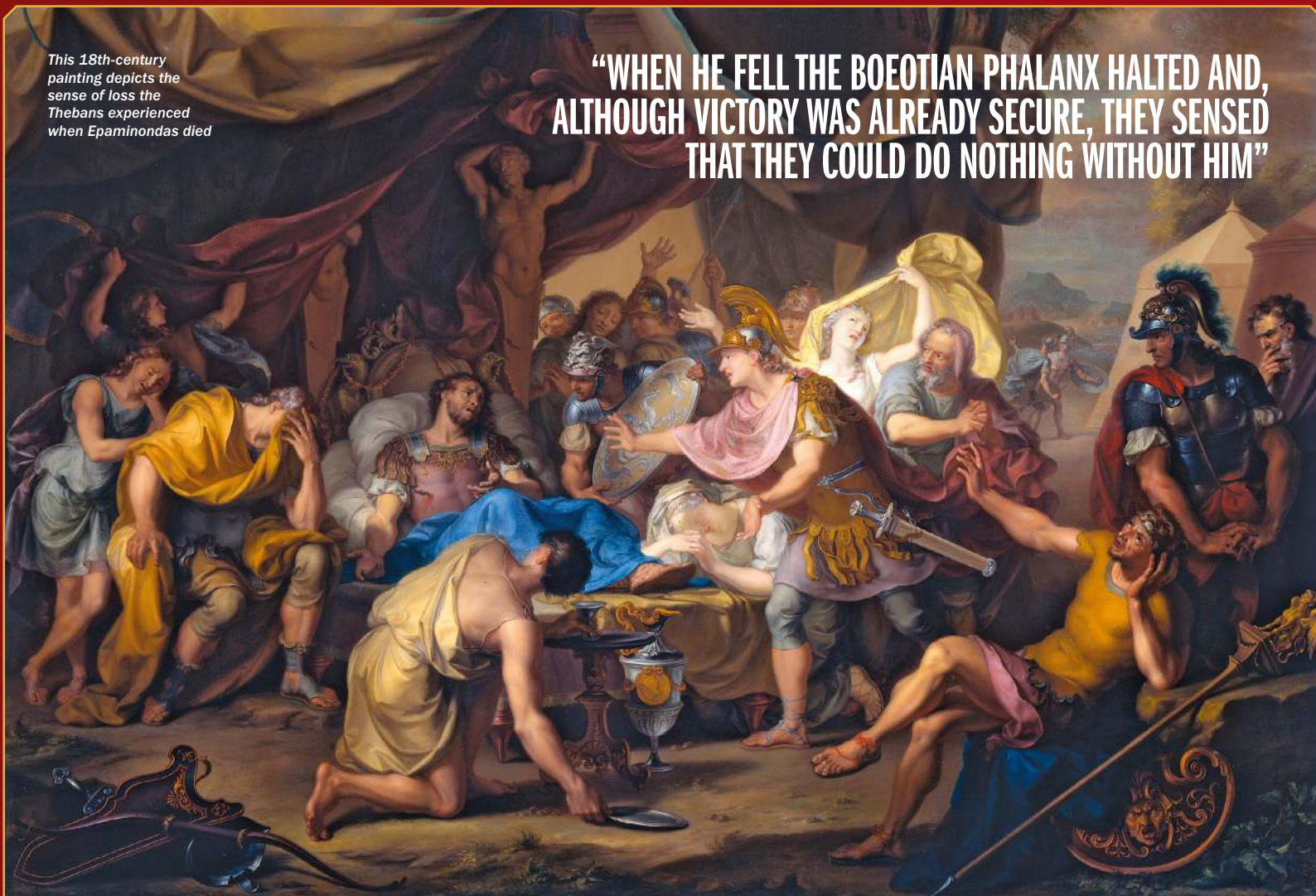
Epaminondas went on to detach other Spartan allies by force or, if he could not do that, ravage and plunder their lands and crops. He took Sicyon, which gave him access to a port in the Peloponnese, and Pellene. The Spartans and Athenians once again refused to come out and face Epaminondas in the open field. Epaminondas's second invasion seems





This 18th-century painting depicts the sense of loss the Thebans experienced when Epaminondas died

“WHEN HE FELL THE BOEOTIAN PHALANX HALTED AND, ALTHOUGH VICTORY WAS ALREADY SECURE, THEY SENSED THAT THEY COULD DO NOTHING WITHOUT HIM”



much less impressive than the first, but it did further harm Sparta and render it unable to impose its will on other Greek states.

There may have been dissatisfaction at Thebes with Epaminondas's policies concentrating only on the Peloponnese, since he was not re-elected Boeotarch for 368 BCE. Alternatively, this may have been a result of the prosecution by his enemies. Without Theban or Epaminondas's leadership, the Arcadians and Eleians squabbled, eventually declaring war on each other in 365 BCE.

Epaminondas rejoined the Theban army as a regular hoplite for the year of 368 BCE. When the army was serving against Alexander of Pherae in Thessaly and were led astray by their Boeotarchs, the men of the phalanx called on Epaminondas to lead them to safety. He stepped out of the line and did so, saving them from defeat, according to Diodorus. This reveals the high regard that he was held in by the rank-and-file, and also his own humility by returning to the ranks when not elected for office. Epaminondas may also have been a member of the Sacred Band and recognised as an elite hoplite in his own right. Pelopidas died in 364 BCE and Epaminondas seems to have taken over as *lochagos* of the Sacred Band.

In 366 BCE Epaminondas invaded the Peloponnese for a third time. This time he invaded Achaëa in the north and sought to deprive Sparta of yet another ally. He also sought to build a fleet to rival Athens in the Aegean. This was a miscalculation.

### Death at Mantinea

In 362 BCE peace was concluded between Elis and Arcadia but this soon embroiled Thebes and Epaminondas as leader of the Boeotian-Peloponnesian alliance. The pro-Theban members of the alliance requested that Epaminondas lead an expedition to the Peloponnese. This was approved, but the Theban government put a caveat on the expedition requiring it to be concluded within four months.

Epaminondas marched, and the opposing forces met him at Mantinea. These included men from Elis, Arcadia, Athens and part of the forces from Sparta. Epaminondas planned a bold night march on an undefended Sparta. The Spartan King Agesilaus II (who had only advanced a short way from Sparta with the rest of the Spartan force) had time to fall back and prepare defences. Epaminondas's men swept into the city – the first force ever to do so, but the city was desperately defended and fighting in the narrow streets favoured the defenders. Epaminondas was forced back. He decided to return north and sent his cavalry ahead to try and seize Mantinea. Both of these gambits were bold and sound but neither came out in Epaminondas's favour.

Epaminondas marched his infantry north towards Mantinea in battle formation. He encountered the enemy forces drawn up at the narrowest point of the plain and ordered his men to ground arms. This gave the impression that he was camping for the night and some of

the enemy forces likewise made camp. Sending his cavalry forward to create a dust cloud, Epaminondas ordered his units (*lochoi*) to mass on the left wing where he was positioned. This formation mirrored that at Leuctra. His force numbered probably 25-30,000 and the opposing forces some 20,000. His dense left flank probably included all of the Boeotian hoplites, some 6-7,000 men. The plan, as at Leuctra, was to break through on the enemy right and then roll up the line, preventing any group escaping to Mantinea.

As before, the rest of the line was drawn up obliquely. Epaminondas advanced, which threw the enemy into a panic when they realised. The Boeotian cavalry saw off the paltry Spartan horse, and their retreat disrupted the Spartan phalanx. Epaminondas's massed phalanx smashed into the Spartan right wing and, just as at Leuctra, they broke and ran. As the pursuit of the Spartans began, Epaminondas himself fell. When he fell the Boeotian phalanx halted and, although victory was already secure, they sensed that they could do nothing without him. With Epaminondas's death the Theban hegemony of Greece also died, although Theban power persisted until it was destroyed by Philip and Alexander in 338 BCE.

Epaminondas's career was a remarkable one of amazing success and innovation, as well as tactical and strategic foresight. His fellow Boeotians knew what a prize they had in Epaminondas, and with his death they knew what they had lost.

Images: Alamy, Getty



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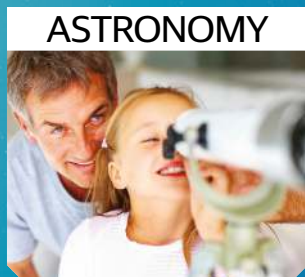


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## REVIEWS

Our pick of the latest military history books &amp; films

ARMS AND ARMOUR  
OF LATE MEDIEVAL EUROPEAuthor: Robert C. Woosnam-Savage Publisher: Royal Armouries Museum  
Price: £9.99 Released: 30 September 2017

## THE BUSINESS OF BATTLE, IN ALL ITS MEDIEVAL SAVAGERY

There are a lot of myths about the medieval world, from flat earthers to *prima noctis*, and not least among this slim volume's many accomplishments is the way Woosnam-Savage definitively lays to rest that old canard that a knight had to be winched up on to his horse. Not only does he prove it's not true, but the author even tracks down where it was first mooted, as well as who helped to insert the idea into the popular imagination.

First, the proof. A little thought is enough to suggest how risible the idea is, for if it were true an unhorsed knight on the battlefield would be as helpless as an upturned tortoise and just as easy to dispatch. But Woosnam-Savage then goes on to point out how well the weight of full armour, evenly spread over the body, compares to the kit that modern-day soldiers have to lug around, mostly on their backs. Indeed, a recent demonstration pitted two men, one dressed in armour, the other carrying modern battle kit, against each other over an assault course, which the 'knight' won easily.

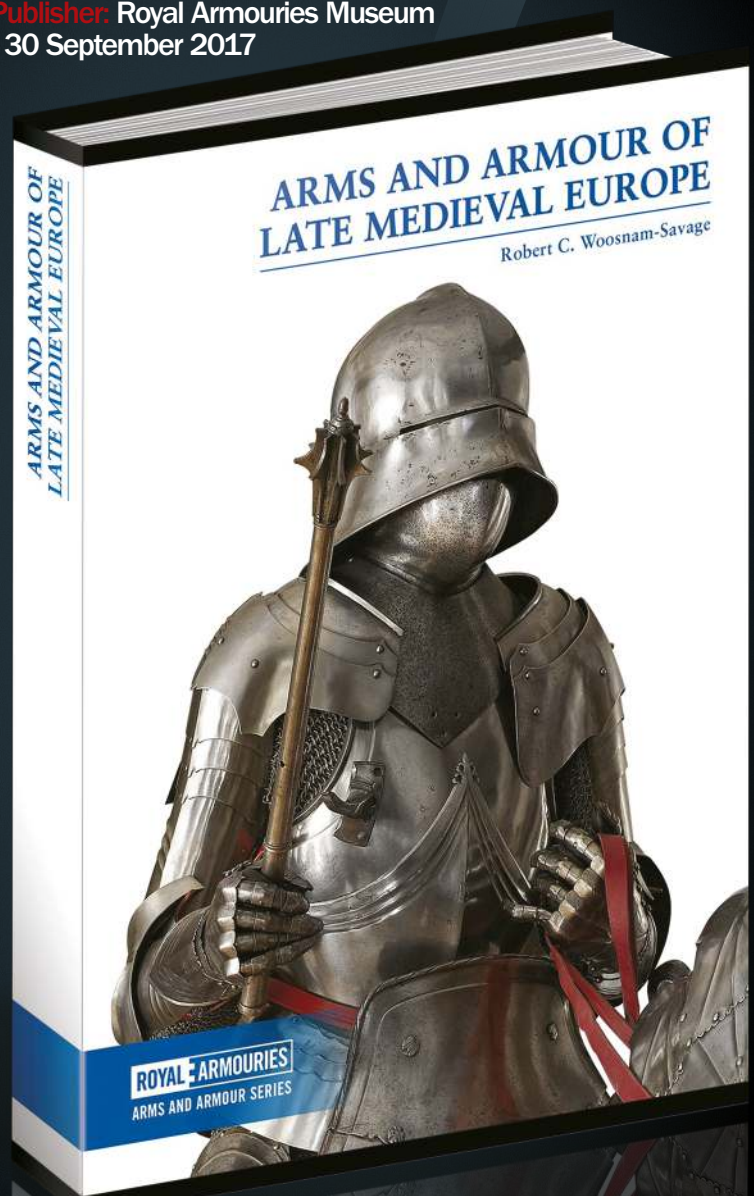
Another of the book's strengths is the author's familiarity with the source material. So as further proof of the mobility of armour, he quotes from the chronicle of Jean Boucicaut, marshal of France, who would vault on to his horse, somersault and dance, all while wearing full armour. To close his case, Woosnam-Savage cites a 15th-century chronicle that recorded a fully armoured man at arms who fell into the River Moselle yet still reached the bank without drowning.

The emphasis of the book is on the practical aspects of medieval

arms and armour. In that, it would make an excellent companion volume to another recent book reviewed in *History of War*, *How to Read European Armor*, which focused on armour as an expression of power and the art of the armourer. Woosnam-Savage is much more concerned with arms and armour as they were used practically – in war, tournaments and even hunting. As such, he follows the evolution of weapons and defence through the 14th and 15th centuries as the knight reached his shining apotheosis, only to be rendered obsolete by the improvement in gunpowder weapons.

The study of medieval military technology, like all such specialised fields of inquiry, can be overpoweringly detailed and technical, as well as riven by scholarly disputes over what might seem trivial issues. Woosnam-Savage, writing for the newcomer to the field, has produced a clear, concise and – as near as possible in 96 pages – complete account of how medieval warriors, from knights through to bowmen, armed and protected themselves upon the battlefield, with just enough telling detail to bring the subject to vivid life. One knight during the siege of Pontevedra (1397) fought on despite a crossbow bolt piercing his nose, and in the press of men it was hit with a shield and driven further into his head. Yet Don Pero Niño survived. Medieval knights were evidently tough on the inside as well as on the outside.

Oh, and it was Laurence Olivier's 1944 film *Henry V* that popularised the idea of knights being winched onto their horses.



**“MEDIEVAL KNIGHTS WERE EVIDENTLY TOUGH ON THE INSIDE AS WELL AS ON THE OUTSIDE”**



# NELSON'S LOST JEWEL

Author: Martyn Downer Publisher: The History Press Price: £20.00

THE STORY OF THE ICONIC JEWEL THAT WAS SNATCHED FROM THE NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM IN GREENWICH

It is not often that a jewel theft provokes outrage in the House of Lords, but the disappearance of Lord Horatio Nelson's Chelengk in June 1951 gave rise to such an occasion. About 2.00am on the morning of 11 June, the prized diamond plume was stolen from the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich. The police calculated it took the burglar four minutes to make off with the diamond decoration that in 1798 had been presented to Nelson by the Ottoman Emperor Sultan Selim III, after the admiral's decisive victory at the Battle of the Nile.

The burglary was deemed to be a carefully planned smash-and-grab, commando-style operation. The thief had used a collapsible ladder to climb up to the window 3.5 metres (11 feet) above the ground to get down to the gallery where the Chelengk was on display.

In the House of Lords debate on 26 June, Lord Pakenham informed his fellow peers that a reward had been offered for the return of the Chelengk, a sum which he claimed was considerably in excess of the gem's break-up value.

"His Majesty's Government and all concerned greatly deplore this shocking theft of the most treasured possession of one of our greatest national heroes," he exclaimed, "and the whole nation must hope that the reward offered and the measures now being taken may result in its return." Alas, Lord Pakenham hoped in vain, for the jewel has never been recovered.

Viscount Mersey reminded the lords that this was not the only instance of a theft of this nature. In 1948 a London-born burglar named George 'Taters' Chatham stole the Duke of Wellington's ceremonial swords, in what was to prove a long-term criminal relationship with the Victoria and Albert Museum during Chatham's 60-year career. Lord Mersey wrapped up his speech with a practical question: "My Lords, would the reward be subject to income tax and surtax?"

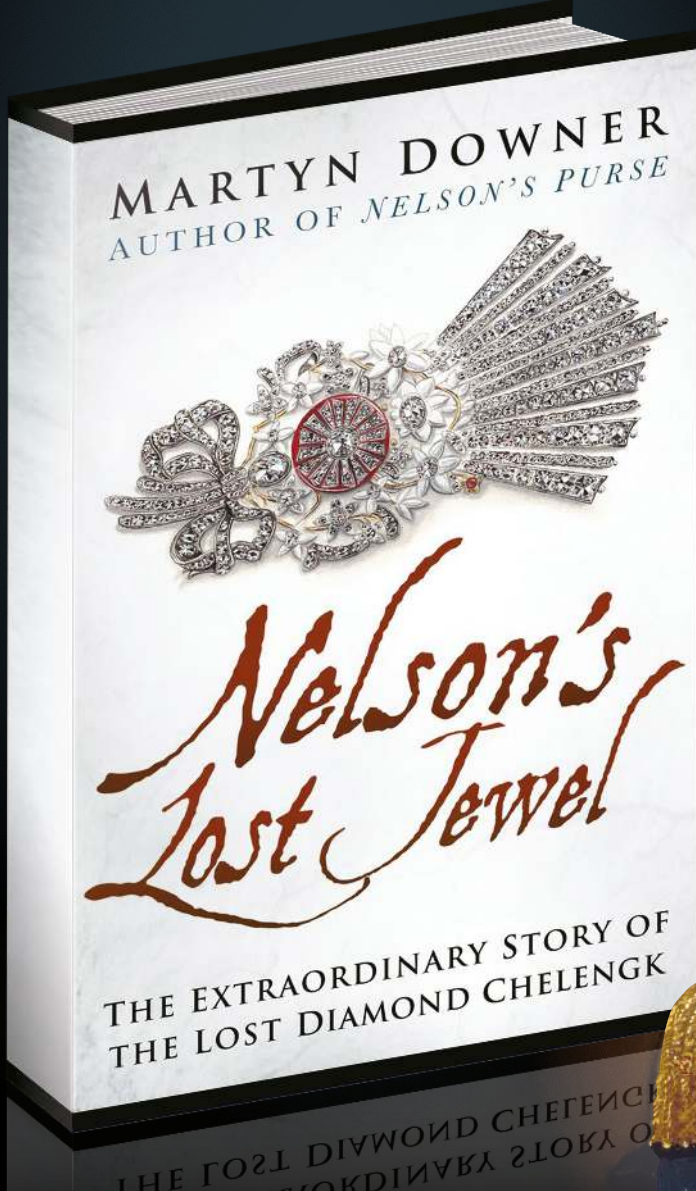
In telling the story of the Chelengk, Martyn Downer takes the reader through a detailed account of the Battle of the Nile, a naval engagement that was instrumental in quashing Napoleon's ambitions

to establish a permanent presence in Egypt as a prelude to invading British India. The battle was regarded as so monumental that Nelson was rewarded with an annual pension of £2,000, an almost unheard-of sum at that time.

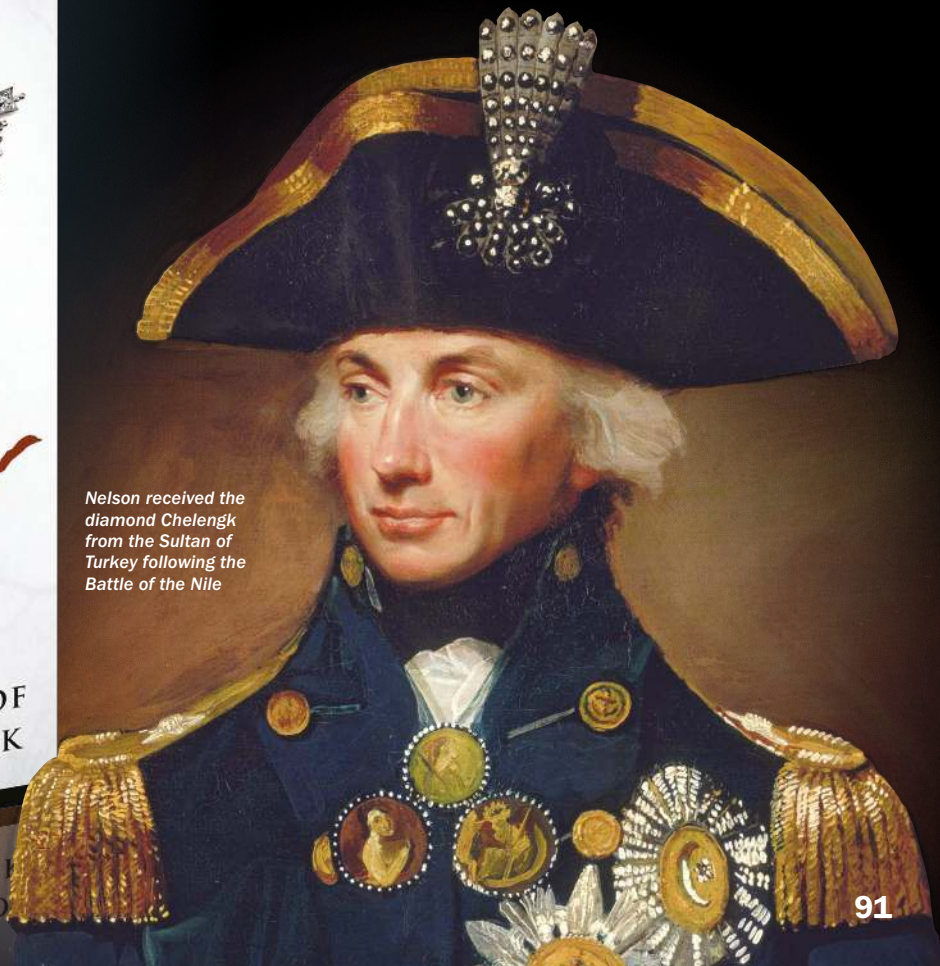
Downer, formerly the head of jewellery at Sotheby's in London, unravels the tale of this gem, charting its journey through history and forging portraits of Nelson and his intimates. The author, acknowledged as a leading specialist in the life and career of Nelson, brings this mystery to life in a scholarly yet highly entertaining narrative.

Chatham admitted to the theft in 1994, a confession the police accepted as genuine. He claimed he had sold the Chelengk for "a few thousand" before it was broken up.

Yet as Downer pointed out, "The jewel stolen by Chatham was not the jewel presented by the Sultan of Turkey. As it passed down from hand to hand, several significant changes were made to the Chelengk, stripping it of some of its exoticism and strangeness, but none of its power to amaze."



**"DOWNER, FORMERLY THE HEAD OF JEWELLERY AT SOTHEBY'S IN LONDON, UNRAVELS THE TALE OF THIS GEM, CHARTING ITS JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY AND FORGING PORTRAITS OF NELSON"**



Nelson received the diamond Chelengk from the Sultan of Turkey following the Battle of the Nile



# JOURNEY'S END

A POWERFUL NEW ADAPTATION OF R.C. SHERIFF'S CLASSIC ANTI-WAR PLAY, DEPICTING THE HORROR AND TRAGEDY OF WAR

**Certificate:** TBC **Director:** Saul Dibb **Cast:** Sam Claflin, Paul Bettany, Toby Jones, Asa Butterfield **Released:** 2 Feb 2018



R.C. Sheriff drew upon his experiences in the trenches during the Great War when writing his 1928 stage play *Journey's*

*End*. He served as a captain in the Ninth battalion of the East Surrey Regiment, saw action at Vimy Ridge and was invalided at Passchendaele. For his service he was awarded the Military Cross.

While the playwright initially struggled to get *Journey's End* into the West End, with companies finding it too gloomy, it resonated with audiences and swiftly became the must-see production. The show's success in London launched the Hollywood career of theatre director James Whale (another war veteran), who took the play to Broadway and adapted it for the screen at Universal Pictures in 1930.

In the age of filmmakers revelling in the carnage of battle and showering the audience with gore, *Journey's End* relies on the depiction of tortured emotions and states of mind. There is very little combat, save for a short sequence where several officers are tasked with running over to the German trenches and kidnapping a soldier for intel purposes. The plot takes place almost entirely within the confines of a trench and inside a cramped officers' quarters.

Sam Claflin is superb as haunted Captain Stanhope, a former school master who has turned to sinking bottle of whisky after bottle of whisky while awaiting the order to go over the top. Set in the days leading up to the 1918 Spring Offensive, it's a

tremendous performance with very little actorly grandstanding involved. Claflin captures so tragically a man whose nerves are beyond shattered and whose volatile temperament masks a deeply traumatised individual who knows the game is up. Like Captain Blackadder in *Blackadder Goes Forth* (1989), a series directly inspired by Sheriff's play, Stanhope often sardonically quips about the utter lunacy of the situation. At heart, *Journey's End* is a sorrowful and strikingly put counter-argument to one of our greatest national myths – the British stiff upper lip and self-image as plucky 'mustn't grumble' types in the face of hardship or challenge.

Director Saul Dibb and cinematographer Laurie Rose make excellent use of the restricted setting, overcoming narrative limitations by heightening the sense of claustrophobia and boredom in waiting to die. It's a suitably grim-looking film, painted in mud tones and drained of nearly all colour. Everything looks drab, coated in thick layers of dirt and dried blood, the gas-lit officers' quarters gives off sepulchral vibes, like the soldiers are ghosts already occupying a crypt. The blank daylight coming in from short wooden staircase up into the trenches symbolising the stairway to heaven the men will be ascending once the order comes in to cross No Man's Land and into the hellfire of the ready and primed German machine guns.

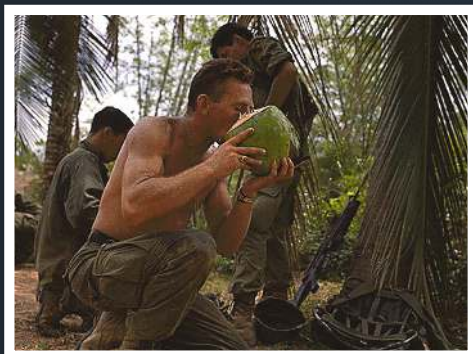
A sombre and deeply moving drama, brilliantly acted and directed, *Journey's End* is an anti-war movie of the finest calibre. Claflin is the standout among the cast, but he is ably backed by a roster of top-notch character actors in Toby Jones, Asa Butterfield, Stephen Graham and Paul Bettany.



**"CLAFLIN CAPTURES SO TRAGICALLY A MAN WHOSE NERVES ARE BEYOND SHATTERED AND WHOSE VOLATILE TEMPERAMENT MASKS A DEEPLY TRAUMATISED INDIVIDUAL WHO KNOWS THE GAME IS UP"**

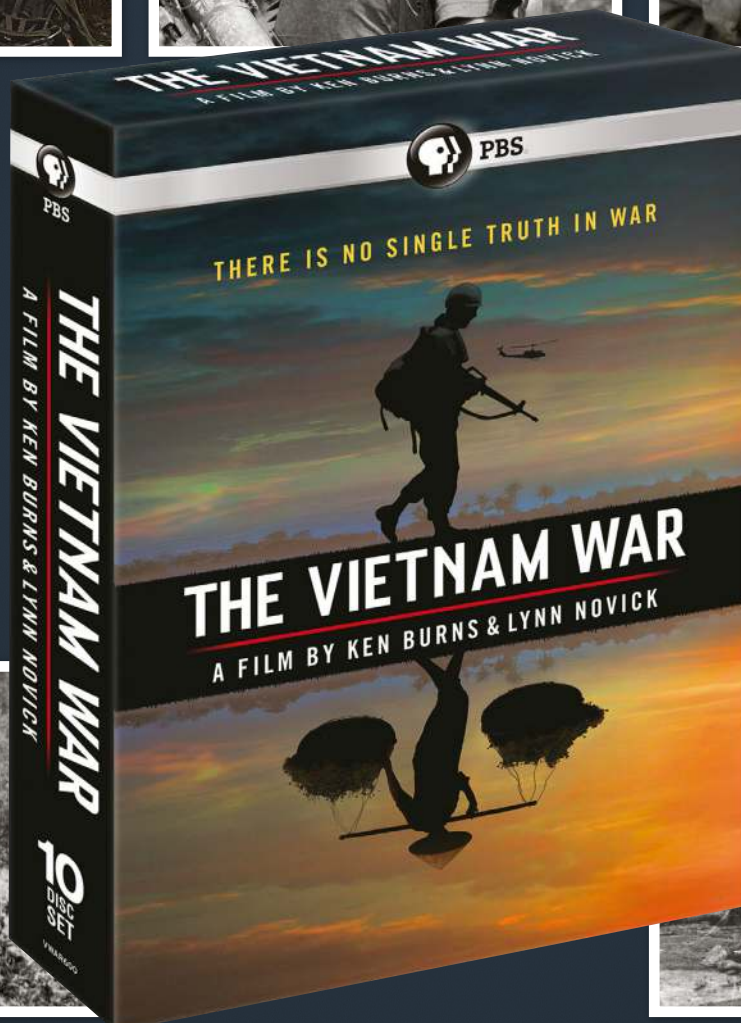


# WIN THE VIETNAM WAR TEN-PART DVD BOX SET



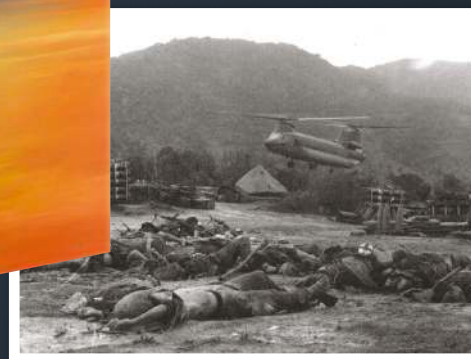
**N**ext year marks the 50th anniversary since the start of the Tet Offensive – the infamous campaign that saw North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces take America and its allies by surprise in a string of effective strikes. Thousands of casualties were inflicted on both sides, and the offensive signalled a critical turning point in an already bloody conflict.

Over 18 hours, a new documentary series from PBS America explores the offensive and every step of the Vietnam War, using nearly 80 eyewitness accounts from both sides, as well as digitally-remastered footage taken on the battlefields.



Accompanying the footage and narration is a chilling original score performed by world-famous musicians Atticus Ross, Trent Reznor and Yo-Yo Ma, as well as many of the iconic tracks that defined the era.


Over ten years in the making, this film is an outstanding achievement and a must-watch for those interested in this critical period in world history. **History of War** readers have the chance to win one of three DVD box sets, each of which contains a companion book and a music CD (total value £69.99)– visit [www.HistoryAnswers.co.uk](http://www.HistoryAnswers.co.uk) to enter. For more information on PBS America's documentaries, visit: [www.pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org)



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Oliver Cromwell at the Battle of Worcester. He considered this last battle to be his "crowning glory", although it is little-remembered today

# WORCESTER

## THE BATTLEFIELD OF LIBERTY



Speaking in support of this year's Warwick Words History Festival Charles Spencer reveals the forgotten battle that permanently changed England and almost cost the life of the 'Merry Monarch'

**T**he British Civil Wars did not end with the execution of Charles I in 1649 as is commonly supposed. The Stuarts were monarchs of both England and Scotland, but the English had not consulted the Scots during Charles's trial and execution. Subsequently, the angered Scots proclaimed Charles's heir as King. The youthful Charles II then invaded republican England to claim his English throne. However, he was defeated at Worcester on 3 September by Oliver Cromwell and the New Model Army in a battle that finally ended the civil wars.

Although Charles's subsequent dramatic escape from England is famous, historian Charles Spencer reveals how the Battle of Worcester was one of the most important battles of the age and changed the course of British, and perhaps global, history.

### **How extensive was Charles II's military experience before 1651?**

We tend to think of Charles II in terms of being the 'Merry Monarch' but during the Civil War he saw action repeatedly. He was present at the first major engagement, Edgehill, as a 12 year old, and he and his younger brother James, Duke of York (later James II) had to be stopped from joining in a charge at the enemy.

Towards the end of the First Civil War he was sent to the south west to lead the Royalist forces there. Although he had professional generals with him he never shirked his military duties. He was witness to rolling defeats that

eventually forced him into exile in 1646. Even when the Second Civil War erupted in 1648 Charles led the English fleet that had deserted Parliament and fled to the Netherlands. That summer he was ready to lead his ships in a large-scale naval encounter off the English coast when a storm scattered the two fleets, but his officers saw for themselves that he was genuinely keen to get stuck into the action. He absolutely rejected their entreaties to take safety below deck.

### **What were the differences in quality between Oliver Cromwell's New Model Army and Charles II's primarily Scottish force during the Worcester Campaign?**

The New Model Army was a key factor in turning the tide of the civil wars against the Royalists: its soldiers were militarily tough, extremely disciplined and filled with the belief that God was on their side. They were ably supported by the militia of various counties, which had New Model Army men added to their ranks in order to raise their level of fighting.

**"WORCESTER WAS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT BATTLES OF THE AGE AND CHANGED THE COURSE OF BRITISH, AND PERHAPS GLOBAL, HISTORY"**

Charles's Scottish army only numbered 16,000 men and was led by clan chiefs and leading aristocrats. They were a pitiful sight, and they knew it: their artillery consisted only of leather guns, rather than metal ones. It was all very one-sided and was made more so by the fact that Cromwell had an advantage of more than two to one.

### **How did the Battle of Worcester unfold on 3 September 1651?**

3 September 1651 was a sparkling day. Charles II looked from a church tower first thing and saw Cromwell's vast army deploying pontoon bridges and advancing in huge numbers. The Parliamentary artillery opened up to announce that battle was underway, and Worcester was then assaulted by the New Model Army in two waves.

The main Scottish cavalry unit, numbering 3,000 men under General Leslie, looked at the way the battle was going and left the field without fighting. Up to 4,000 Royalist soldiers were put to death, while Cromwell lost a few hundred men. There was particular carnage inside the packed streets of Worcester.

### **In purely military terms, how does Cromwell's victory at Worcester compare to his other battlefield successes?**

Worcester was, Cromwell believed, his "crowning glory". It was the last battle he fought, and it ended Royalist military resistance. It was also the third, final part of the civil wars.



It was an overwhelming triumph, and was recognised as such. Before, it was possible that Charles I's son could seize the throne, but afterwards the republic was solidly established. Although the results were so far-reaching, Cromwell noted that there were several hours on that day when the battle could have gone either way, because most of the Royalists resisted with great bravery. While Marston Moor won the north of England, Naseby destroyed Charles I's main army and Dunbar was an astonishing turn around, Worcester was the ultimate knockout blow.

**How did Charles II conduct himself during the battle?**

Charles was noted for his great personal bravery. He put himself into the heat of the action and exhorted his men to fight on. When defeat was inevitable, he shouted out that he would rather be shot than taken prisoner. Once all was lost, the 21-year-old Charles tried to persuade his generals that they should continue fighting. They – who knew what utter defeat looked like – almost had to drag him away from Worcester.

**How did Parliamentary forces treat Royalist prisoners after the battle?**

You did not want to be taken prisoner. It was all very brutal. After Worcester there were so many men captured that all the surrounding towns and cities became holding stations while they were processed. Many were then sent to London – slowly, so that preparations could be made for receiving them. Thousands of Scots were penned into a prison compound on marshy land at Tothill Fields, outside the capital, where only the wounded could be guaranteed shelter. Many hundreds died there from exposure and disease.

Others were sent in indentured servitude – little better than slavery – to North America, the Caribbean and to drain the Fens.

English observers delighted in saying how bestial the Scottish prisoners were: but, given how they were treated, this is not surprising.

**The future US presidents and founding fathers John Adams and Thomas Jefferson visited the battlefield at Worcester in 1786, and Adams described it as “the ground where Liberty was fought for”. To what extent do you think that is true?**

I believe the Battle of Worcester was of such huge importance that it should be much better remembered now than is the case.

After it, the extreme, almost feudal, form of kingship of Charles I was incapable of returning. While the balance between crown and parliament was in question until 1688, Worcester represented the death knell of military force underpinning kingly excess.

Adams and Jefferson could see the clear link between the Parliamentary triumph at Worcester and the rise of political ideals that underpinned the American constitution.

**“CHARLES WAS NOTED FOR HIS GREAT PERSONAL BRAVERY. HE PUT HIMSELF INTO THE HEAT OF THE ACTION AND EXHORTED HIS MEN TO FIGHT ON”**

*To Catch a King: Charles II's Great Escape* is Charles Spencer's new account of Charles II's famous escape from the Battle of Worcester. It is published by HarperCollins and is on sale now. For more details visit: [www.harpercollins.co.uk/to-catch-a-king](http://www.harpercollins.co.uk/to-catch-a-king)

Charles II famously had to hide up an oak tree for a day while Parliamentary troops searched for him after the Battle of Worcester. Today, over 400 English pubs are named 'The Royal Oak' to commemorate this event

Images: Getty





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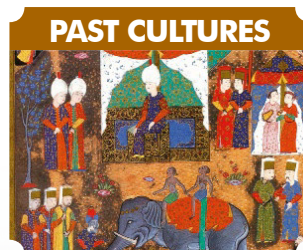


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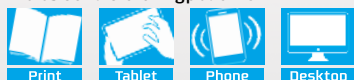


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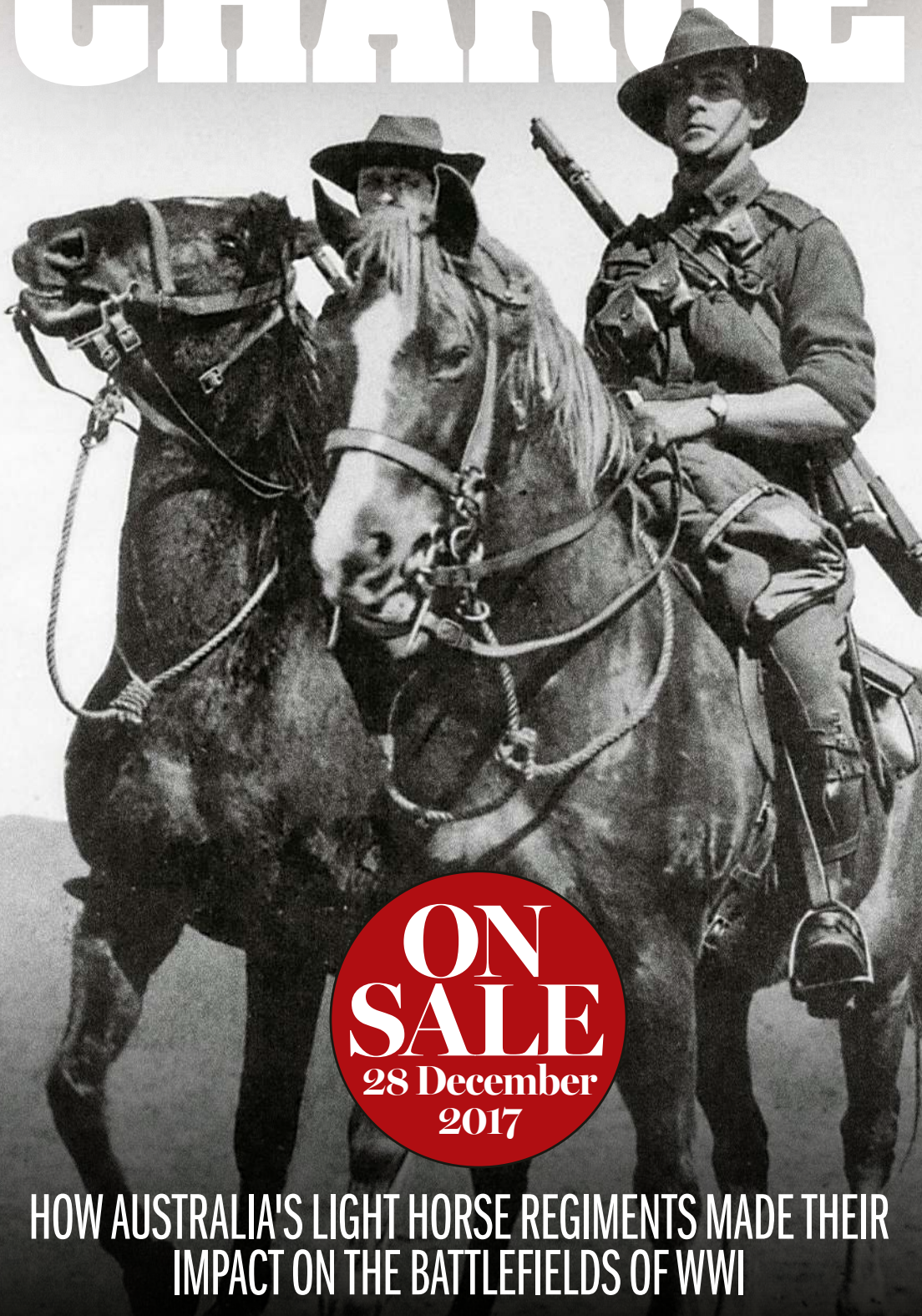
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# ROUNDHEAD WELFARE SEAL

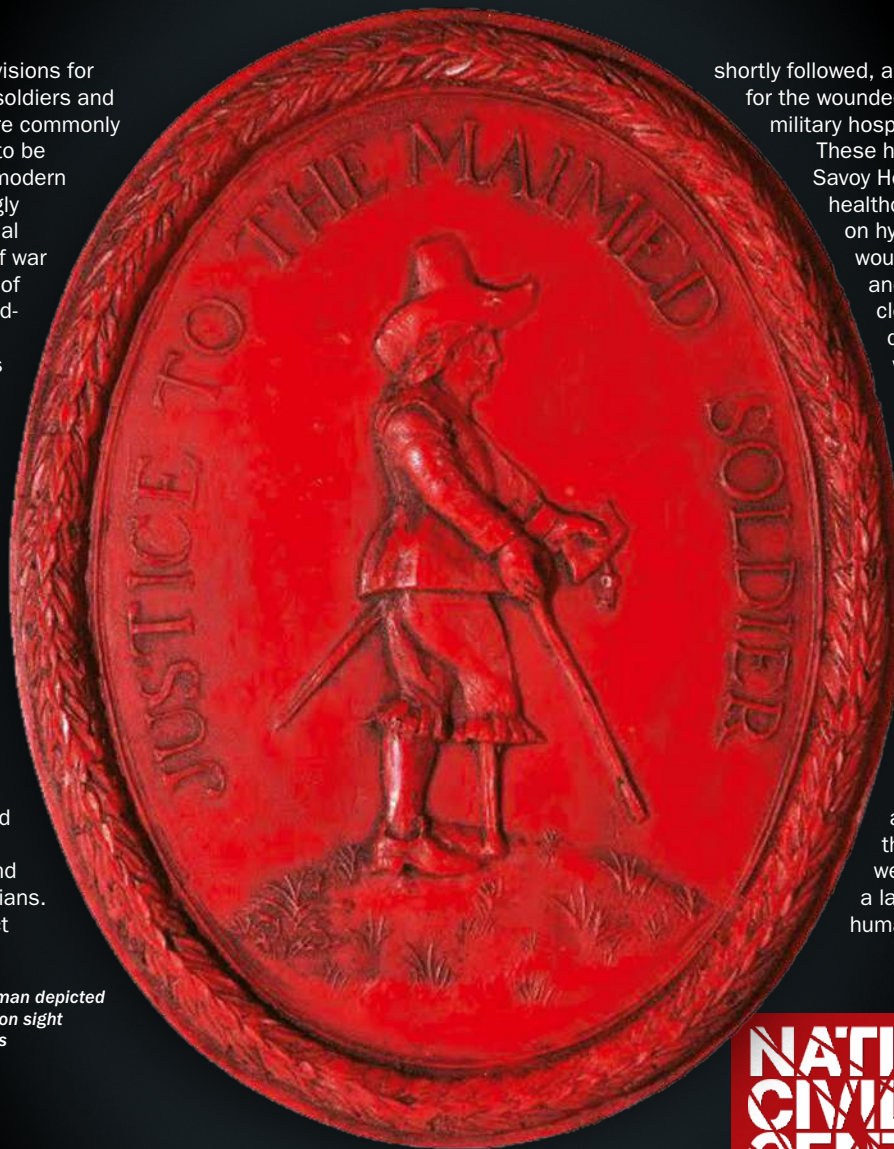
This object is a striking example of how England's parliament cared for its troops during the British Civil Wars

**W**elfare provisions for wounded soldiers and families are commonly assumed to be relatively modern institutions, but it is surprisingly poignant to discover that official care for the living casualties of war was provided for the veterans of the British Civil Wars in the mid-17th century.

This evocative wax artefact is the official seal of Parliament's 'Committee for Sick and Maimed Soldiers' and depicts a wounded soldier who has lost a leg, with an inscription that declares, "Justice for the Maimed Soldier." The seal's existence sheds a fascinating light into Parliament's care for its troops.

In the aftermath of the Battle of Edgehill in October 1642, Parliament passed an unprecedented act that recognised the state's responsibility to provide welfare for its wounded soldiers. Even more strikingly, it also cared for the widows and orphans of killed Parliamentarians. A committee to enforce the act

*Right: Maimed soldiers such as the man depicted in the seal would have been a common sight during and after the British Civil Wars*



shortly followed, and it initially raised £200 for the wounded to be cared for in purely military hospitals in London.

These hospitals, such as the Savoy Hospital, had quite advanced healthcare with a strict emphasis on hygiene. The medical staff would regularly change linen and towels and thoroughly clean the buildings. They also devised complex systems of war pensions.

As the war progressed and grew ever more bloody Parliament raised £4,000 to meet its welfare commitments by imposing county levies, sequestering the properties of Royalists and Roman Catholics and excising funds from receipts on food, alcohol and animals. The system was therefore not universal and only benefitted Parliamentary soldiers and their families, but the committee's initiatives were groundbreaking and a landmark development in humane state intervention.

**"IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE OF EDGEHILL IN OCTOBER 1642, PARLIAMENT PASSED AN UNPRECEDENTED ACT THAT RECOGNISED THE STATE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE WELFARE FOR ITS WOUNDED SOLDIERS"**

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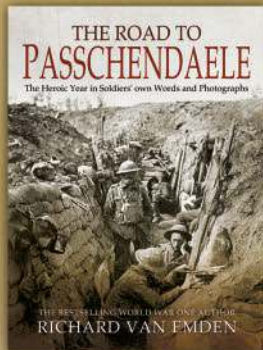




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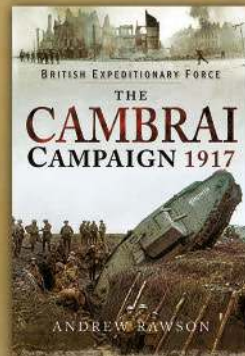
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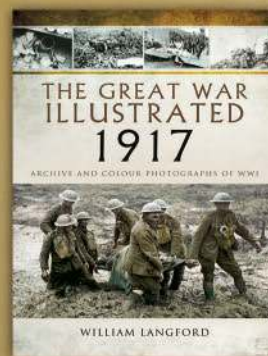
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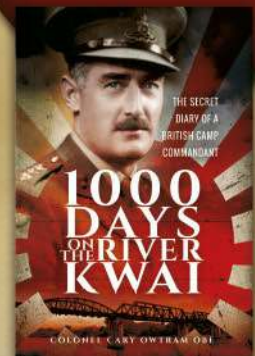
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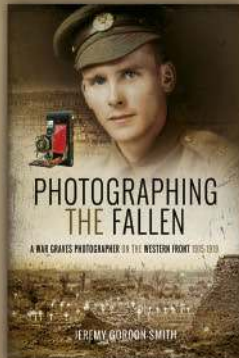
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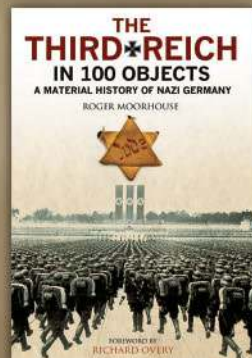
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